THE Hollywood Reporter

OCTOBER 23, 2015



Will *Tarzan* Be the Next *Pan*?

A double-booked director dilemma at Warner Bros.

2015 POWER SHOWRUNNERS

The Rebirth of Ryan Murphy

TV's top provocateur claims he's calmer, wiser but no less driven as he now juggles three shows, two kids, one eight-figure deal and a personal reckoning with his tortured past: 'It's not a battle anymore'

'It's Easier for You Because You're Black'

A tightrope as broadcast networks' diversity programs get put to the test

Adoption Squeeze Hits Hollywood

Even a big name (probably) can't get a baby any faster

Murphy with his 1-year-old son, Ford Miller Murphy

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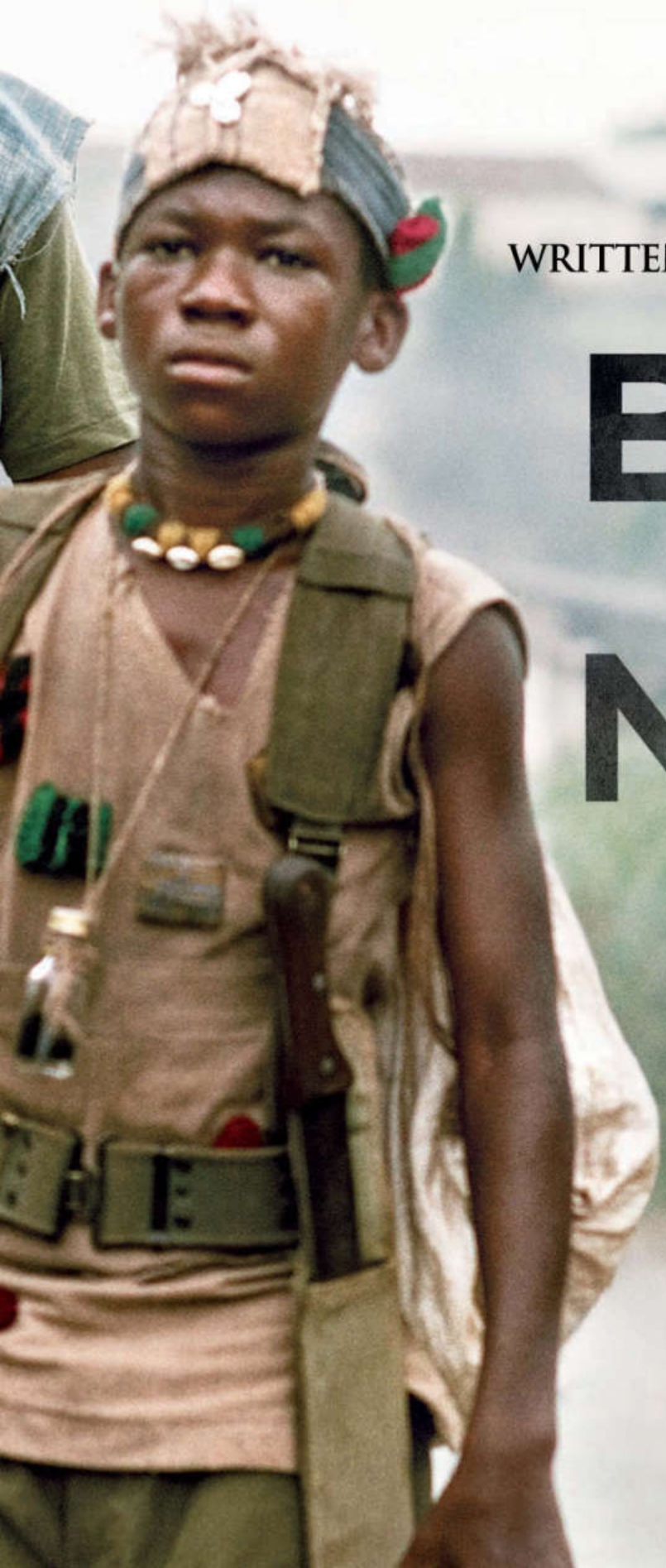
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"I'm still the kid in high school who gets called 'fag' and wants that girl to be my friend," says Murphy, photographed Oct. 8 on the Fox lot in Los Angeles. To find out who he would love to work with, go to THR.com or THR.com/iPad.

Styling by **JENNY RICKER**
This page, on Murphy: James Perse T-shirt, Citizens of Humanity jeans, Prada shoes, his glasses. On the cover, on Murphy: Tom Ford turtleneck.

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Two kids, three shows and a massive eight-figure deal. At home and on set with TV's top provocateur, Ryan Murphy, as he peels back the complicated layers of his tortured past — and reveals what's coming next: "It's not a battle anymore." **By Lacey Rose**

56 Power Showrunners 2015
THR's annual rundown of TV's 50 most valuable writer-producers (and teams), whose worth only keeps rising in this golden age of content — tarnish and all. Plus: the suffering and inspiration of 5 superscribes, photographed in their offices. **Edited by Michael O'Connell and Stacey Wilson Hunt**

70 TV's Diversity Dilemma
As networks enact aggressive programs to integrate their writers rooms ("it's easier to get into Harvard Law School"), graduating minority scribes "can be put at a disadvantage," says one showrunner, who cites the peculiarities of program financing as the culprit. **By Rebecca Sun**

PHOTOGRAPHED HERE AND FOR THE COVER BY Miller Mobley


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"I do prefer [writing] on the bed. I can be on there for eight to 10 hours," says Marti Noxon, photographed with her dog Marley on Sept. 30 at her Studio City home.



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Jane Lynch (left) and Emma Stone attend the 13th annual Gala in the Garden on Oct. 10 at the Hammer museum in Westwood.



The 1970s spirit lives on with this Tamara Mellon studded denim pencil skirt ($650).

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"People think it's as simple as going to Ralphs and picking a baby off a shelf," says one prospective parent, as foreign countries shut down the pipeline and pricey consultants rush to fill domestic demand in a process where even a big name (probably) can't get you an infant any faster.

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Eddie Murphy receives the Mark Twain Prize for American Humor at the Kennedy Center.

CORRECTIONS Sam Esmail created *Mr. Robot*. ... Seth Rogen did not meet with David Fincher before being cast in *Steve Jobs* (*THR* 10/16).

SHOE: JOSEPH SHIN. STONE: STEFANIE KEENAN/GETTY IMAGES/COURTESY OF THE HAMMER MUSEUM.

NOXON PHOTOGRAPHED BY Amanda Friedman

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and we salute all of our talented showrunners

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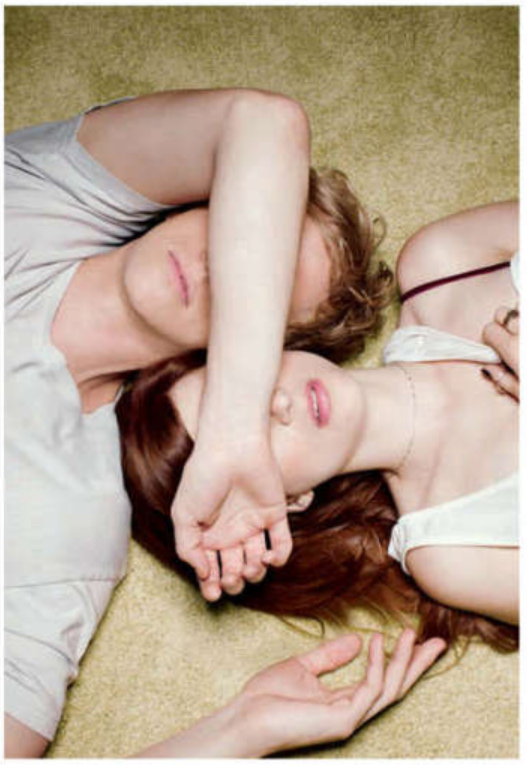
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Warner Bros.' *Tarzan* Trouble: A Double-Booked Director

Still reeling from the epic flop *Pan*, the studio faces issues with helmer David Yates focusing on J.K. Rowling's *Fantastic Beasts* even as his $180 million ape-man saga remains unfinished By Kim Masters

STILL TALLYING ITS STAGGERING LOSS ON *Pan*, Warner Bros. is said to be facing an unusual challenge on its next mega-budgeted fantasy reboot: *Tarzan*. With the film still needing considerable work before its July 1 release date, director **David Yates** has started shooting his next Warners project, **J.K. Rowling**'s *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*.

Warners sources say the move from *Tarzan* to *Beasts* always was planned. "While it's somewhat unusual, we are extremely comfortable with the production timelines, which were set in advance, and have total confidence in the skill of David Yates — who is a four-time *Harry Potter* director — to deliver both of these pictures," says a Warners studio executive.

But one source involved with the project is concerned that *Tarzan*, with a budget of around $180 million and packed with visual effects, isn't getting the attention it needs. "The schedule of the J.K. Rowling movie got in the way of an appropriate postproduction schedule on *Tarzan*," says this person. "Why would you ever crowd a director into starting a movie before his other movie is properly finished?"

Sources say early test screenings of *Tarzan*, an adventure starring **Alexander Skarsgard** of HBO's *True Blood* as the vine-swinger and **Margot Robbie** as Jane, did not go well. But studio sources say the film is not finished and it's routine for movies to be revised and improved. And a Warners insider notes that both **Steven Spielberg** and **Clint Eastwood** have gone into preproduction on projects before their previous film is finished, though none has been as expensive, complicated or challenged as *Tarzan* appears to be.

Yates began shooting *Beasts*, starring **Eddie Redmayne** and a large ensemble cast, in August, and a studio source says he is focused on that film during the week while reviewing edits of *Tarzan* on weekends. Sources say if that process proves too cumbersome to get the movie ready in time, Warners could push the film off its summer release date. Warners has **Guy Ritchie**'s *Knights of the Roundtable: King Arthur* on July 22 and the DC Comics team-up *Suicide Squad* on Aug. 5, so its schedule is crowded.

The studio, long the gold standard in Hollywood, is in the midst of a protracted bad run; pricey flops this year include *Jupiter Ascending* and *The Man From U.N.C.L.E. Pan* could lead to a loss of $130 million to $150 million, say analysts. In that context, especially, the *Tarzan* situation has raised eyebrows.



Skarsgard and Robbie are relatively unknown leads for a summer tentpole.

$150M
Budget for *Pan*, envisioned as a *Harry Potter*-style family franchise

$15.3M
Domestic opening-weekend box office, far below Warners' low expectations

$150M
Possible loss on *Pan*, say analysts, once a hefty marketing spend is included

Veteran producers and executives not involved with the project say they can't remember a studio pulling a director off one unfinished big-budget live-action movie to start another. But *Beasts* — at least as expensive as *Tarzan* and probably more so — has to make its own release date in November 2016.

Yates, 51, has been an extremely valuable asset to Warners as the director of four *Harry Potter* movies that collectively grossed more than $4 billion worldwide. Securing author Rowling's commitment for *Beasts* was a coup for Warners CEO **Kevin Tsujihara** in September 2013, just a few months after the executive — who lacked experience in film or television — took over the studio. A trilogy based on the textbook mentioned in the *Harry Potter* series is dated for 2016, 2018 and 2020.

"Notwithstanding that *Tarzan* isn't a cheap movie, the [*Beasts*] series is clearly one of Kevin's three planks in his platform," along with *Lego* and DC Comics, says a source close to the studio. "At Warner Bros. right now, anything pales in comparison to those three silos."

THR HEAT INDEX



RIDLEY SCOTT
The 77-year-old filmmaker's *The Martian* drops only 32 percent in its second weekend for a domestic total of $108.7 million and a worldwide haul of $227.7 million.



ROBERT ZEMECKIS
The director suffers the worst opening weekend of his career with $3.7 million for *The Walk* as an early Imax run and a big Sony marketing campaign fail to spark audiences.



BARBRA STREISAND
As if her EGOT status wasn't enough, the actress-director-singer will receive the Sherry Lansing Leadership Award at *THR*'s Women in Entertainment event in December.



MARCUS WILEY
Snapchat's top programming exec and most of his team are laid off as the social network abandons production of original content on its Snap Channel.

SHOWBIZ STOCKS

$36.90 (+6.6%)
IMAX (IMAX)
The giant-screen movie exhibitor spins off Imax China, and the stock rises 10 percent in its first day of trading on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange.

$20.21 (-7.3%)
PANDORA MEDIA (P)
Investors react negatively to the digital music company's announcement it will pay $450 million to acquire Ticketfly.

Oct. 5-12

ROBBIE: DEREK STORM/EVERETT COLLECTION/NEWSCOM. SKARSGARD: DAN STEINBERG/INVISION/AP. TARZAN: MGM/PHOTOFEST. GUTHRIE: PETER KRAMER/NBC. SCOTT, STREISAND: EVAN AGOSTINI/INVISION/AP. ZEMECKIS: AP PHOTO/ZACHARIE SCHEURER. WILEY: COURTESY OF FOX.

One insider notes that *Tarzan* also has suffered the loss of producer **Jerry Weintraub**, who died July 6: "If there was a strong independent producer on the movie, this could have been managed better." And a high-level executive at another studio expresses doubt about the viability of the *Tarzan* property and casting a relative unknown, Skarsgard, as the lead, saying, "You shouldn't make that movie without an actor you're dying to see in the part."

Wall Street analyst **Harold Vogel** says he wouldn't judge any film before its release but has concerns about the Warners slate. "The whole strategy over the last two years has been to emulate Disney and Marvel," he says. "It shows a possible exhaustion of ideas." He points to the studio's attempt to invigorate DC, which begins in earnest with *Batman v. Superman: Dawn of Justice* (March 25), as well as making such fantasy fare as *Pan*, *Tarzan*, *King Arthur* and a live-action *Jungle Book* set for 2017, more than a year after Disney's **Jon Favreau**-directed version of the **Rudyard Kipling** novel opens. Still, Vogel says he doesn't expect the studio's issues to affect Time Warner's stock price at this point.

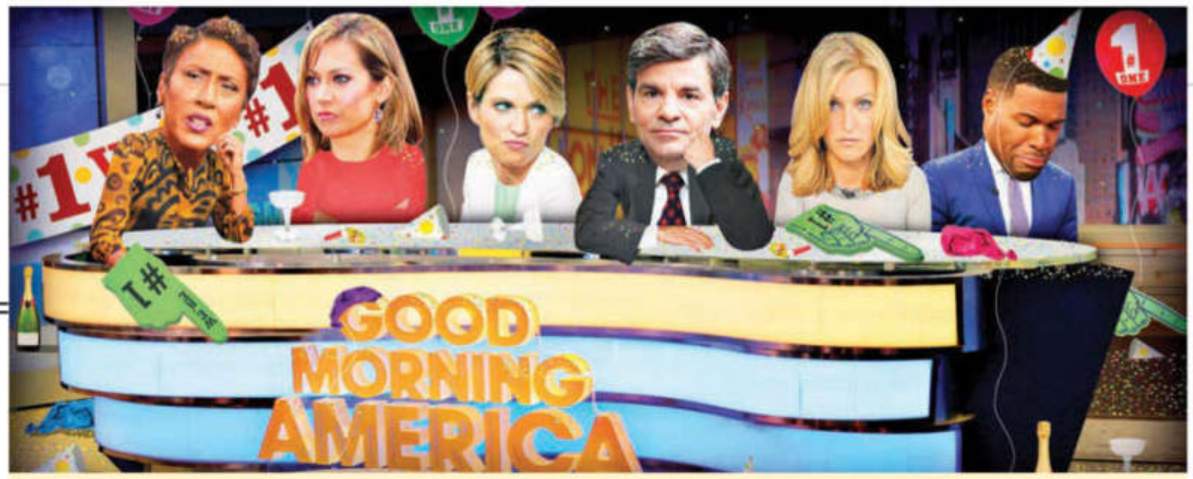

Yates


Rowling


Tsujihara

Richard Greenfield of BTIG also says the critical question for Warners is the execution when it comes to DC. "They have laid out a multiyear strategy pinned to DC Comics spanning movies, TV, video games and [merchandise]," he says. "In turn, the success of *Batman v. Superman* and [the CBS series] *Supergirl* are of paramount importance."

Clearly, Warners insiders are hopeful that *Batman v. Superman* and *Beasts* will be major triumphs in the months ahead. "When things aren't working, everybody seems stupid," says a studio insider. "And when it works, they all seem like geniuses." THR



HOW *TODAY* SPOILED *GMA*'S RATINGS PARTY

THE MORNING TV WARS HAVE TAKEN ANOTHER TURN. NBC's *Today* topped ABC's *Good Morning America* in the critical 25-to-54 demographic for five weeks in a row, beginning Aug. 31. And when Nielsen delivers final numbers for the week ending Oct. 9, the NBC program is expected to best *GMA* again, extending its streak to the longest in more than three years.

It's not that *Today* is surging. So far this year, both shows are down in viewers 25-to-54. *Today* is just down less; 8.5 percent compared to *GMA*'s 13 percent. For the first two weeks of the 2015-16 season, *Today* is down 1 percent, while *GMA* is down 21 percent in the demo and 11 percent in total viewers. (*CBS This Morning* is the only show up in both measures.) No one at *Today* is "popping any champagne corks," as an NBC News insider puts it, but staffers feel the page has been turned on **Ann Curry**'s tearful 2012 exit and *GMA* toppling *Today*'s 16-year win streak (celebrated with champagne).

At stake are not only bragging rights but millions of dollars. In 2014, *Today* pulled in more than $435 million in ad revenue, according to Kantar, and nearly $600 million when factoring in the 9 a.m. and 10 a.m. hours. *GMA*, which airs two hours a day, grossed $363 million. Both shows have shown increases this year.

Today's regroup has been enabled by a busy news cycle dominated by the 2016 presidential race and **Donald Trump**. (Trump has been a frequent guest on *GMA* and *Today*, but on the phone because he has declined to make the trip to either show's studio. He has yet to appear on *CBS This Morning*, which has refused to waive its requirement that he appear in person.) NBC News president **Deborah Turness**, now running day-to-day operations under **Andy Lack**, has stressed exclusive bookings and a more chatty set since she took over in 2013. *Today* has booked memorable interviews with **Tracy Morgan**, **Hillary Clinton** (in a New Hampshire town hall) and **Joyce Mitchell**, the prison seamstress who helped two inmates escape. But *GMA* has answered with sit-downs with **Hulk Hogan** on his use of the N-word; **Kim Davis**, the Kentucky clerk who refused to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples; and **Monica Lewinsky** in her first TV interview in 10 years.

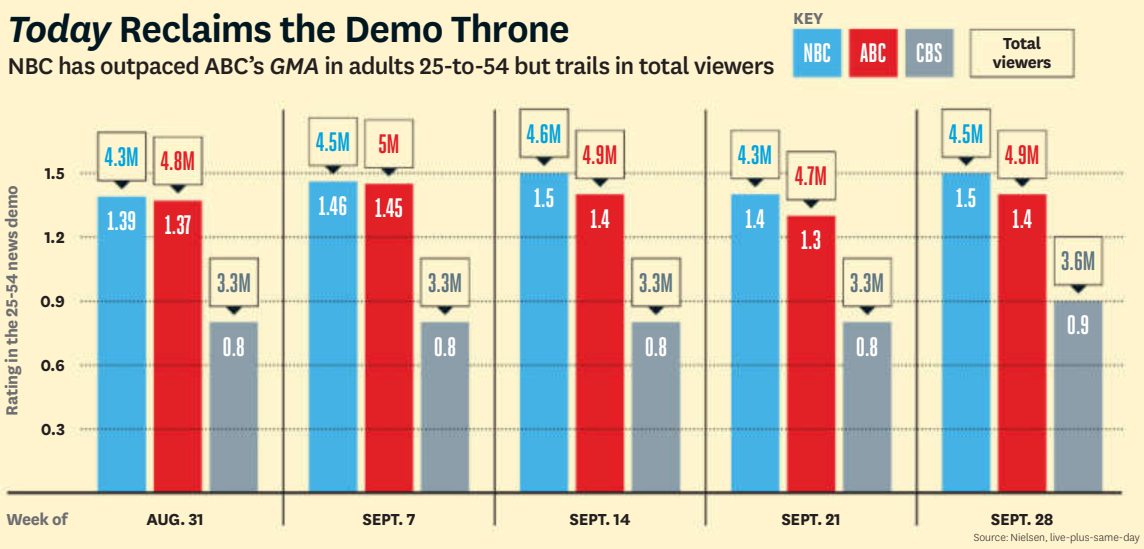

Bush

GMA still leads in total viewers and remains the top-rated morning show of the season and the past three years, even as the full anchor team in place when the show first beat *Today* is no longer. **Sam Champion** left for the NBCUniversal-owned Weather Channel in 2013, and **Josh Elliott** exited last year for NBC Sports after contract talks with ABC News broke down. This makes *Today* the show with the longer-running anchor team, led by **Matt Lauer** and **Savannah Guthrie**. Evidence suggests that on-air stability is key. But there have been behind-the-scenes changes; **Noah Oppenheim**, who quit *Today* to work at reality power Reveille, rejoined in March as *Today* preps for the 2016 Olympics. "*Today*'s technique has been to iron out kinks in the period between Olympic Games so that when the inevitable surge in sampling occurs, there is a viable and attractive product for people to switch to," notes analyst **Andrew Tyndall**.

Today arguably failed to capitalize on the Sochi Winter Olympics in 2014; once the Games concluded, the show fell back behind *GMA*. So *Today* likely will continue to make changes; during the past few months, the show has introduced enterprise reporting segments. And the 9 a.m. hour anchored by **Willie Geist**, **Tamron Hall**, **Natalie Morales** and **Al Roker** could see changes. Sources say *Access Hollywood* host **Billy Bush** is being courted to move from L.A. and take over, though he recently signed a new deal with NBCU-owned *Access*. (NBC declined comment.) "What is going on at the moment at *Today* is getting everything right for Rio," says Tyndall. "That is when I expect it to be able to cash in conclusively on *GMA*'s slippage." — MARISA GUTHRIE

Today Reclaims the Demo Throne

NBC has outpaced ABC's *GMA* in adults 25-to-54 but trails in total viewers



Source: Nielsen, live-plus-same-day

TSUJIHARA: CHRIS PIZZELLO/INVISION/AP. BUSH: MARK VON HOLDEN/INVISION FOR UBUNTU EDUCATION FUND/AP IMAGES. YATES: AP PHOTO/JOEL RYAN. ROWLING: EVAN AGOSTINI/INVISION/AP. PAN: COURTESY OF WARNER BROS. PICTURES. ROBACH, STEPHANOPOULOS: RW/MEDIAPUNCH/IPX/AP. ZEE, SPENCER: MEDIAPUNCH/REX SHUTTERSTOCK. STRAHAN: ABC/FRED LEE. ROBERTS: MEDIAPUNCH/REX SHUTTERSTOCK.

ILLUSTRATION BY John Ueland

The best in prime time.

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Who Will Win the War on Nielsen?

The deeply flawed standard-bearer of audience stats is under attack as Rentrak and ComScore merge (even as digital has become the Volkswagen of media measurement)

By Michael Wolff

THE CENTRAL MEDIA currency is not audience, but trustworthy measurement.

The television business was built on wide adoption of such a single standard. Nielsen's sampling method determined the size and basic demographics of the audience an advertiser reached and therefore what the advertiser paid. But in the competition with digital, which uses different measurement standards, and in the shift to new screens without reliable measurement protocols, measurement has come unstuck and the currency is in something of an existential freefall.

Nielsen has lagged in its efforts to standardize this new video marketplace. Its evermore disputed measurements helped cause this summer's deep dive in television stocks and have provided the basis of reports that TV watching is imperiled. Now, in a major, if not inevitable, challenge to Nielsen and in an effort to put the Humpty Dumpty of standardized measurement back together again, Rentrak, the upstart movie and VOD measurement company, is merging with ComScore, the leader in digital analytics.

It's an almost comical exercise to try to portray the Wild West nature of current measurement standards. Digital media's basic promise was that, with its total tracking capabilities, it would return absolute single-user results (no more unmeasured bathroom breaks). But, in fact, digital has become the Volkswagen of media measurement, with, by some estimates, advertisers paying for traffic that is 30 percent click fraud and, by a large amount, traffic that has moved off a page before an ad even loads. What's more, without a single standard, almost every website offers a unique data story, with a ComScore measure almost always at odds with an internal measure and the vast increase in mobile behavior another old lot variant.

A lack of trustworthy digital measurement has been in part responsible for the heavy discounting in digital ad rates. But, curiously, that same lack of standardization, and industrial scale hyperbole and fraud, has allowed 100 million-monthly-unique-visitor sites and billion-view videos to become common, helping fuel a digital bubble. At the same time, TV remains tethered to Nielsen, which, over the past 18 months, has tracked a dramatic falloff in traditional viewing, but has not captured the surge in delayed and over-the-top viewing.

Viacom, with its younger audience, has been clobbered by Nielsen numbers, but in something of a reality warp, has seen little dent in per-subscriber fees paid to it by cable systems that carry its channels — and, too, much higher viewing in the Rentrak profile.

It's a tempest in methodology. Nielsen infers its make-or-break analysis from a sampling of 20,000 homes. The TV industry complains that with myriad new behaviors to measure, that is not a mathematically large enough sample — and it asks, not unreasonably, why not 20 million homes? And, indeed, Rentrak and ComScore are out to offer a total, "census based" data profile — not a sampling, but an exact portrait of behavior on every browser, smartphone, set-top box, OTT outlet, TV and those yet to come.

Rentrak started 30 years ago as a video-rental store, but it soon was competing with Nielsen's survey-based movie measurements and pushing Nielsen out of that business. Then Rentrak extended to VOD ratings, and then to all set-top-box behavior. Now, joining with ComScore, it believes it can offer a universal picture of who's watching what, where and when at every minute of the day.

Indeed, Rentrak data, overlaid with public databases and now ComScore's digital profiles, provides the base for the new generation of addressable TV — wherein an ad can be served to a single demo and geo-located viewer — which, by some estimates, will add $2 billion to this presidential campaign's TV spending (stock short sellers take note).

So, who needs Nielsen?

Alas, the more data, the less clear the data picture seems to become. And the less reason there is to trust anyone with data, and the further we move from a world ruled by genial data consensus. Hence a reason for *more* data, reaching a new standard not of ultimate authority but of who is less bad than the others. Rentrak, as Nielsen might note, failed its review earlier this year by the Media Rating Council (the MRC said it isn't unusual for a complex system to fail its first audit). On the other hand, ComScore passed its audit with flying colors.

Nielsen, itself trying to forge a more comprehensive measurement package in partnership with Facebook, also will point out that a household or device measurement, without a more qualitative survey aspect, will fail to distinguish the critical fact of who in a house actually is using the device.

And then there are the larger content players that simply don't want to be measured. In Netflix, Amazon, Apple and others that push beyond advertising, the currency is the opposite of measurement: Keep them guessing.

Which is now pretty much the state of the art. THR

Nielsen Still Dwarfs a Combined Competitor

ComScore and Rentrak aim to take on the TV leader

	COMSCORE/RENTRAK	NIELSEN
CEO	Serge Matta	Mitch Barns
HEADQUARTERS	Reston, Va.	New York; Diemen, Netherlands
EMPLOYEES	1,600	40,000
EXPECTED ANNUAL REVENUE	$457 million	$6.3 billion
EXPECTED ANNUAL PROFIT	$100 million	$381 million
MARKET CAP	$2.9 billion	$17.2 billion
PRODUCTS AND SERVICES	Movie measurement, linear TV, VOD, home entertainment data, website traffic analysis, more	Nielsen ratings, "people meters," Nielsen Digital Ad Ratings, ad-effectiveness analysis, more

Source: Company reports

ILLUSTRATION BY Kyle Hilton

WE'VE GOT THE

TYLER PERRY FEVER

Tyler Perry's FOR BETTER OR WORSE





TYLER PERRY'S The HAVES and the HAVE NOTS

TYLER PERRY'S IF LOVING YOU IS WRONG



THREE CHEERS FROM YOUR FRIENDS AT **OWN**

Weekend Numbers

	DOMESTIC Gross	DOMESTIC Cume	INT'L Gross	INT'L Cume	TOTAL
1. The Martian FOX	37	108.7(2)	58.1*74	119	227.7
2. Hotel Transylvania 2 SONY	20.4	116.9(3)	22.7*59	90.9	207.8

The animated film remained a powerhouse in its third weekend and, in the U.S., has pulled ahead of the first *Hotel Transylvania*, which had earned $102.1 million at the same point in its run.



3. Pan WARNER BROS.	15.3	15.3(1)	20.5*54	25.1	40.4



The results were as sobering overseas as in the U.S., jeopardizing chances the international box office can rescue the film. One wild card is China, where it is set to open Oct. 22.

4. The Intern WARNER BROS.	8.7	49.6(3)	14.8*62	57.6	107.2
5. Sicario LIONSGATE	7.6	26.9(4)	6.4*62	16.7	43.6
6. Maze Runner: The Scorch Trials FOX	5.4	70.8(4)	16*61	168.9	239.7
7. The Walk SONY	3.7	6.4(2)	5.2*60	7.1	13.5
8. Black Mass WARNER BROS.	3.12	57.6(4)	2.6*17	6	63.6
9. Everest UNIVERSAL	3.07	38.3(4)	8.3*65	119.2	157.5
10. The Visit UNIVERSAL	2.5	61.2(5)	2.5*26	22	83.2
11. War Room SONY	1.9	63.6(7)	N/A	2.2	65.8
12. The Perfect Guy SONY	1.42	54.7(5)	N/A	N/A	54.7
13. Ladrones LIONSGATE	1.41	1.4(1)	N/A	N/A	1.4
14. He Named Me Malala SEARCHLIGHT	687K	771K(2)	N/A	N/A	771K

Davis Guggenheim's documentary, boosted by an A CinemaScore from art house and mainstream moviegoers alike, expanded to 446 theaters during its second weekend.



15. 99 Homes BROAD GREEN	648K	825K(3)	N/A	N/A	825K

Source: Rentrak; box-office estimates in $ millions
() Weekends in release; * Territories



Moore passed on a rich Netflix offer because he wants *Where to Invade Next* to play in theaters.

Will Harvey Rescue Michael Moore's Movie?

Sources say Weinstein, once the target of the filmmaker's lawyers, could help release the documentary By Tatiana Siegel

MYSTERY SHROUDS **Michael Moore**'s new movie, *Where to Invade Next*. After a splashy opening-night premiere Sept. 10 at the Toronto Film Festival, Moore was forced to wait nearly a month to announce a buyer. And now the distributor, a new label headed by former Radius-TWC chiefs **Tom Quinn** and **Jason Janego** and Alamo Drafthouse founder **Tim League**, has yet to announce a release date for the hot-button documentary, raising questions about the unnamed company's financial backing.

Sources say Moore's film — which makes a satirical argument that the American dream is alive and well everywhere but America — will get an Oscar-qualifying run in December in New York and Los Angeles, followed by a wide release in January. But speculation is mounting that Quinn, Janego and League still are putting together financing for the new company, leaving *Where to Invade* in a precarious position.

The much-hyped film was expected to sell quickly, with WME's **Ari Emanuel** setting a $10 million price tag and handling the deal personally. But the latest from Moore, who won a best documentary Oscar for 2002's *Bowling for Columbine*, found little traction among the distributors best poised to handle a wide release. Several buyers passed because it is missing the key element that Moore fans love: "It lacks a villain," says one.

Netflix is said to have made a quick mid-seven-figure offer at Toronto, but that was nixed by Moore, who insisted that his film be seen in the multiplex. "It makes a big difference when you see it in a big theater with 100 people rather than in front of your computer," Moore told *THR*. But with no major distributors clamoring, *Where to Invade* languished for nearly three weeks before the new distributor struck.


Moore


Weinstein

When Quinn and Janego unexpectedly exited The Weinstein Co. in August, a TWC source insisted that the split was amicable and that **Harvey Weinstein** planned to invest in the pair's new company, a point that neither Quinn nor Janego would confirm. Now, as *Where to Invade* idles, talk is building that Weinstein, who passed on the film at Toronto, will come aboard after all. That would be ironic considering Moore sued Weinstein over profits from his most successful film, *Fahrenheit 9/11* (the case settled in 2012). A TWC rep declined comment.

One insider says the film's vague release plans are similar to Radius' *Citizenfour*, which won this year's best doc Oscar, but *Citizenfour* never got wide distribution. Still another insider is baffled by Moore's decisions regarding *Invade*'s sale and release. "This film needs all the love it can get," says the insider. "I don't think he understands that." THR

HOLLYWOOD'S 2016 DONOR ELITE REVEALED

In *The New York Times*' Oct. 10 survey of the 158 families who have donated nearly half ($176 million) of all campaign fundraising for the presidential election, a few Hollywood moguls made the list


1. Haim Saban* MEDIA INVESTOR — $2M


2. Ike Perlmutter CEO, MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT — $2M


3. Len Blavatnik OWNER, WARNER MUSIC GROUP — $1.8M


4. Donald Trump *THE APPRENTICE* STAR AND REAL ESTATE MOGUL — $1.8M


5. Jerry Perenchio FORMER UNIVISION CEO — $1.7M


6. J.J. Abrams CHAIRMAN, BAD ROBOT — $1M


7. Jeffrey Katzenberg CEO, DREAMWORKS ANIMATION — $1M


8. Steven Spielberg PRINCIPAL, DREAMWORKS STUDIOS — $1M


9. Linda McMahon FORMER WWE CEO — $300,000


10. Lee Roy Mitchell FOUNDER, CINEMARK THEATRES — $300,000

* POLITICAL AFFILIATIONS WERE NOT REVEALED; DONATIONS ARE TO PACS AND OFFICIAL CAMPAIGNS; PERLMUTTER PHOTO NOT AVAILABLE.

INVADE, MALALA: COURTESY OF TIFF. MOORE, WEINSTEIN, TRUMP: EVAN AGOSTINI/INVISION/AP. ELLISON, SPIELBERG: JORDAN STRAUSS/INVISION/AP. BLAVATNIK: RICHARD YOUNG/REX/REX USA. HOTEL: COURTESY OF SONY PICTURES. *PAN*: LAURIE SPARHAM/WARNER BROS. SABAN: BTL/BRIAN TO/WENN/NEWSCOM. PERENCHIO: ERIC CHARBONNEAU/INVISION/AP. KATZENBERG: CHRIS PIZZELLO/INVISION/AP. ABRAMS: JORDAN STRAUSS/INVISION FOR GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE/AP IMAGES. MITCHELL: RYAN MILLER/GETTY IMAGES. MCMAHON: ANTHONY BEHAR/SIPA USA/NEWSCOM. *IRON MAN*: PARAMOUNT PICTURES/PHOTOFEST.

CONGRATS

NETFLIX PROUDLY CONGRATULATES
OUR 2015 THR POWER SHOWRUNNERS HONOREES

HOUSE of CARDS

BEAU WILLIMON

ORANGE is the new BLACK

JENJI KOHAN

UNBREAKABLE KIMMY SCHMIDT

TINA FEY
ROBERT CARLOCK

NETFLIX

SEE WHAT'S NEXT

7 DAYS OF DEALS

KA-CHING!
WHO'S INKING ON THE DOTTED LINE THIS WEEK

FAITH-BASED TALK: NEW NASHVILLE SHOW ENLISTS *IDOL* ALUM

DEAL OF THE WEEK

ANOTHER BIG personality is trying her hand at daytime television.

Country superstar **Faith Hill** is executive producing a syndicated entry to be co-hosted by *American Idol* alum and fellow country singer **Kellie Pickler** (**CAA**). "Kellie possesses the ability to reach far beyond the camera and into the hearts of people, allowing you to feel immediately connected to her," says Hill (**CAA**, **MFO**, **Jackoway Tyerman**). "There was no question in my mind that she should be a big part of this show."


Hill


Pickler

Also executive produced by *The Oprah Winfrey Show* veteran **Lisa Erspamer** and Hill's manager, Sandbox Entertainment's **Jason Owen**, the untitled lifestyle show will cover such topics as cooking, home design, gardening and entertaining. Five to 10 experts from those fields will be rotating guests, joining Pickler, 29, and one or two co-hosts who have yet to be named.

The show, which hails from Legendary Television, will be shopped to daytime syndicates during the coming weeks in hope of a fall 2016 or 2017 launch.

The show will shoot in Hill's hometown of Nashville, allowing the singer to make occasional appearances in addition to her off-camera duties. "She has lots of great ideas. She's also an incredible curator, so I think that's why having her behind the scenes is really valuable for us," says Erspamer. "Faith coming on board as an executive producer was definitely a big piece of making this work."

Celebrity-led daytime shows have been on the decline during recent years because of high-profile flops from **Katie Couric**, **Anderson Cooper** and **Queen Latifah**, among others. But Erspamer believes the new show's star power and location afford unique opportunities. "Nashville is Music City, so there's music, really, everywhere," she says. "How we present that, we'll want to do in a way that is a little unexpected."

However, celebrity and musical guests will not be a daily occurrence. "We've talked about **Dolly Parton**, we've talked about other country artists, but the show is not going to be about country music," says Erspamer. "Nashville is way more than country music or country — it's a very aspirational city that's very hip and cool."

Erspamer hopes the show's locale will be part of its selling point to viewers: "We spend so much time programming to New York and Los Angeles, and we forget that there's this whole vast world in between." — KATE STANHOPE

Rights Available!

Hot new books with Hollywood appeal

BY REBECCA FORD AND ANDY LEWIS

Gold Fame Citrus
(Riverhead)
BY **Claire Vaye Watkins**
AGENCY **RWSG**



Watkins' debut novel has been building heat with its scarily timely premise: Set in a drought-stricken wasteland that was Los Angeles, a young couple takes in a mysterious child and sets out to escape the scorched, dystopian Southwest.

The Orion Plan
(Thomas Dunne)
BY **Mark Alpert**
AGENCIES **APA/Writers House**
Science meets science fiction in this hotly anticipated February novel from an editor at *Scientific American*: A lone NASA scientist discovers aliens are using nanotechnology to enslave humans and turn Earth into a colony.

Baseball's First Miniseries: The Babe

MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL IS GOING SCRIPTED. The league is developing a miniseries about **Babe Ruth** with **Allen Coulter** attached as director and executive producer, sources tell *THR*. MLB regularly has advised on baseball-centric Hollywood films, including *42*, *Moneyball*, *Million Dollar Arm* and **Clint Eastwood**'s *Trouble With the Curve*, but the Ruth mini is the first scripted project generated internally. Executives are looking to Coulter (*The Sopranos*, **Terence Winter** and **Martin Scorsese**'s upcoming HBO rock drama *Vinyl*) to round out the dramatic scope of Ruth's biography — including his lavish personal life and little-known details — in a way that also will appeal to non-sports fans. Although he has been depicted multiple times, from 1948's *The Babe Ruth Story* to 1992's *The Babe* (with **John Goodman** as the famed Yankees slugger), the ability to render the Sultan of Swat more as an athletic figure and to re-create the dramatic baseball of the 1920s era in modern HD appealed to MLB executives. If the Ruth mini finds a network, look for the league to mine its 100-plus-year archives for more scripted projects. — MARISA GUTHRIE


Ruth

FILM

Jennifer Aniston (**CAA**, **Brillstein**, **Hansen Jacobson**) will star in the novel adaptation *The Yellow Birds*.

Brie Larson (**WME**, **Authentic**, **Sloane Offer**) is in talks to star in the memoir adaptation *The Glass Castle*, replacing Jennifer Lawrence.

Henry Cavill (**CAA**, the U.K.'s **United**, **Sloane Offer**) and **Luke Evans** (**WME**, the U.K.'s **United**) will join Nicholas Hoult in the war drama *Sand Castle*.

Tim Robbins (**ICM**, **Elaine Goldsmith-Thomas**) will join Jon Hamm and Geena Davis in the play adaptation *Marjorie Prime*.

John Ridley (**CAA**, **Brillstein**, **Walerstein Barkin**) will direct the Los Angeles riots drama he wrote for Broad Green and Imagine.

Fifty Shades of Grey's **Kelly Marcel** (**UTA**, the U.K.'s **Casarotto Ramsay**, **Sloane Offer**) and *Togetherness*' **Steve Zissis** (**UTA**, **Abrams**) will write Disney's live-action *Cruella*.

Paramount will adapt Jack Ewing's upcoming book about the Volkswagen scandal, with Leonardo DiCaprio producing.

Joe Robert Cole (**CAA**, **Circle of Confusion**, **Jackoway Tyerman**) is in talks to write Marvel's *Black Panther*.

Steve Zahn (**UTA**, **Principal**, **Frank Stewart**) will play an ape in Fox's *War for the Planet of the Apes*.

Luther's **Neil Cross** (**UTA**, the U.K.'s **Independent**, **Felker Toczek**) will write Fox's remake of *Escape From New York*.

Sons of Anarchy's **Ron Perlman** (**Gersh**, **LINK**) has joined *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* for Warner Bros.

TELEVISION

Sanaa Lathan (**ICM**, **Morris Yorn**) will star in and **Gina Prince-Bythewood** and **Reggie Rock Bythewood** (**CAA**, **Del Shaw**) will write a Fox event series about a police shooting.

Wanda Sykes (**UTA**, **Roger A. Pliakas**) will recur on *Black-ish*.

Sacha Baron Cohen (**WME**, **Ziffren Brittenham**) has formed the production house Spelthorne Community Television and sold the U.K.'s Channel 4 a minority stake.


Halle Berry

The Big Number

Spending in California because of tax credits for productions since 2014, L.A. Mayor Eric Garcetti revealed Oct. 9, including $387 million in crew wages.

$1.07B

Jennifer Lopez (**CAA**, **Medina**, **Hirsch Wallerstein**) will host the American Music Awards on Nov. 22.

CBS has given a production commitment for 13 episodes to a family comedy with Kevin James and ordered to series the murder mystery *American Gothic* from *The Good Wife*'s Corinne Brinkerhoff. The network also will develop the drama *Legalease*, with Halle Berry producing and *The Good Wife*'s Steve Lichtman writing. ... **ABC** will develop a *Fantasy Island* reboot from *X-Men: First Class*' Sheldon Turner. ... **NBC** has ordered a full season of *Blindspot*. ... **Fox** has renewed *Bob's Burgers* for two seasons. ... **AMC** has renewed *Halt and Catch Fire* and made creators Chris Rogers and Chris Cantwell showrunners. ... **Cinemax** will develop the werewolf novel adaptation *The Skin Trade* from *Game of Thrones*' George R.R. Martin.

DIGITAL

Hulu has expanded its deal with Viacom to cover Comedy Central's *Inside Amy Schumer*, *Broad City*, *Drunk History* and *Key & Peele* and MTV's *Faking It* and *Finding Carter*.

Tricia Helfer (**Paradigm**, **Gilbertson**) has joined PlayStation's *Powers*.

Pandora has acquired ticketing service Ticketfly for $450 million.

BOOKS

Quvenzhane Wallis (**ICM**, **Lichter Grossman**) will publish three novels and a picture book via Simon & Schuster in 2017 and 2018.

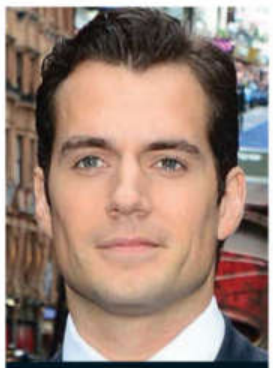
REAL ESTATE

The home of the late **Harold Ramis** (**Coldwell Banker**) near Chicago has sold for $2.3 million.



Tatiana Maslany

The *Orphan Black* star will join **Jake Gyllenhaal** in Lionsgate's Boston Marathon drama *Stronger*.



Henry Cavill



Sanaa Lathan

HILL, PICKLER: EVAN AGOSTINI/INVISION/AP. BOOK: COURTESY OF PENGUIN RANDOM HOUSE. RUTH: PHOTOFEST. BERRY: JIM SMEAL/BEIMAGES. MASLANY: VINCE BUCCI/INVISION FOR THE TELEVISION ACADEMY/AP IMAGES. CAVILL, SKREIN: JON FURNISS/INVISION/AP. LATHAN: ANDY KROPA/INVISION/AP. SCOTT: JON FURNISS/INVISION FOR INTEL/AP IMAGES.

REP SHEET



▲ *The Transporter Refueled* star **Ed Skrein**, a villain in *Deadpool*, has signed with **CAA**, as has *Mustang* director **Deniz Gamze Erguven**.

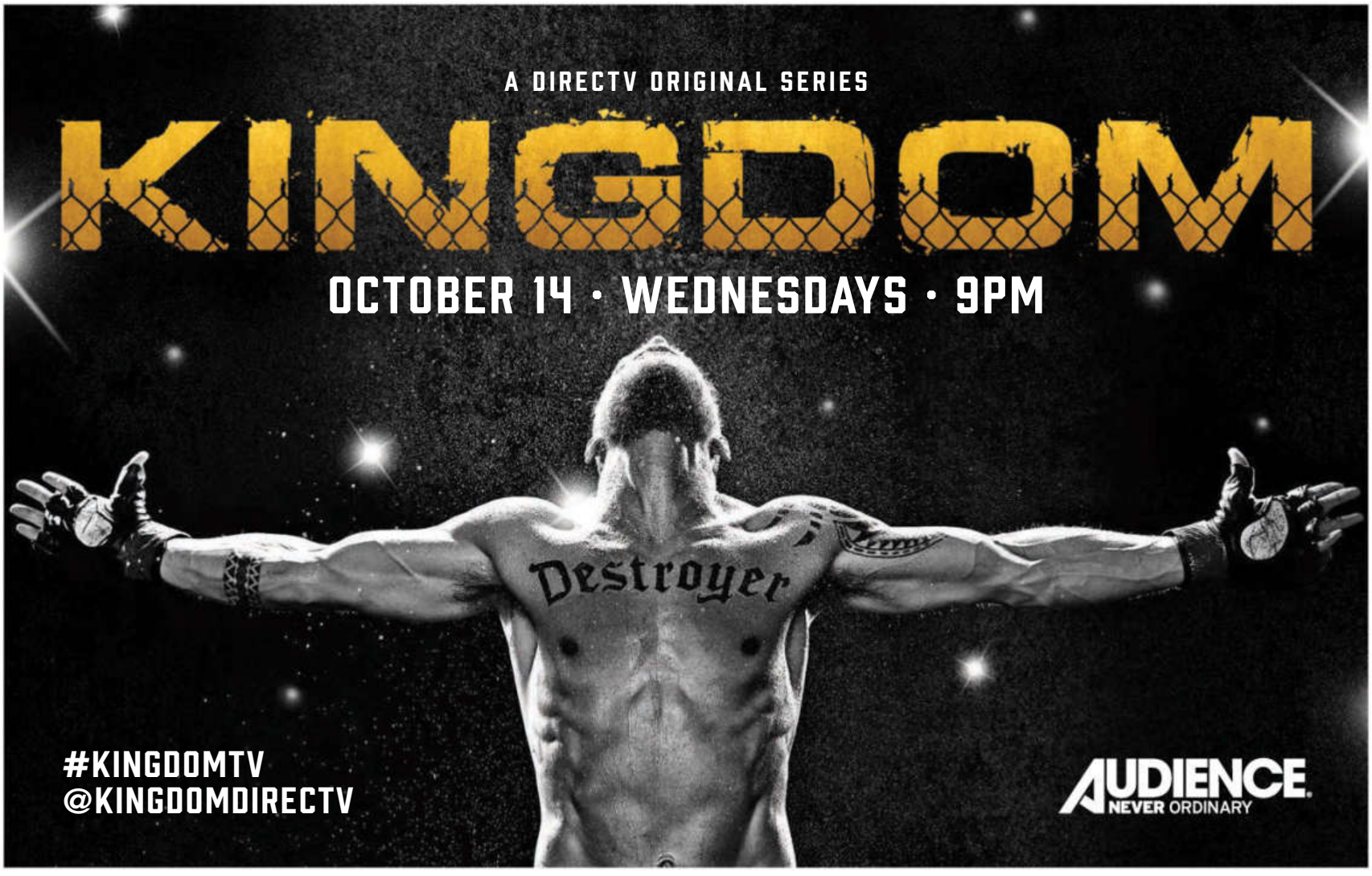
The Tenderloins, the comedy troupe behind truTV's *Impractical Jokers*, has signed with **UTA**.

Frank Langella, next in the LBJ biopic *All the Way*, has signed with **ICM Partners** and **Circle of Confusion**.

NEXT BIG THING



Name
Naomi Scott
Reps
The U.K.'s United, Station 3, Myman Greenspan
Why She Matters
Following roles in *The Martian* and on the Fox series *Terra Nova*, the actress, 22, will star opposite Antonio Banderas in *The 33*, Warner Bros.' Chilean miners drama, and play the Pink Ranger in Lionsgate's big-screen *Power Rangers*.



YES, I DID SAY THAT!

A look at who's saying what in entertainment

Compiled by Andy Lewis



"I was that girl."

RIHANNA
The singer, reflecting on how she thought she could change former boyfriend Chris Brown, with whom she got back together after he assaulted her in 2009.

"Love cannot be lost."

JIM CARREY
The actor, tweeting about former girlfriend Cathriona White, who was pronounced dead from suicide on Sept. 28. Carrey was a pallbearer at her funeral in Ireland on Oct. 10.

"This dude needs a reality check."

ELLEN POMPEO
The *Grey's Anatomy* star, tweeting about Daniel Craig's comment that he'd "rather slash my wrists" than play James Bond again after *Spectre*, which opens wide on Nov. 6.

"Look, man, I know what it's like to be young and crazy on Twitter."

TREVOR NOAH
The *Daily Show* host, joking about 84-year-old Rupert Murdoch's tweet: "Ben and Candy Carson terrific. What about a real black President who can properly address the racial divide? And much else."

"I specifically set out to make a kind of uncool film."

JOE WRIGHT
The *Pan* director, on his approach to making the Peter Pan origin story, in an interview conducted before the film — which cost more than $150 million to produce — grossed only $15.3 million in its opening weekend.

"A closed mouth doesn't get fed."

LUCY LIU
The *Elementary* actress, explaining that the way she helps attain more diversity is to speak up and ask producers and directors she works with to cast more Asian-Americans.

"Do you really think that this country is going to elect a black guy from the South Side of Chicago with a funny name?"

BARACK OBAMA
The president, joking in a speech about the possibility of Kanye West, who hails from Chicago (where the Obamas lived before moving to the White House), running for president in 2020.

"It would be weird if I wasn't talking to these guys."

CHRIS ALBRECHT
The Starz CEO, conceding that reports about his pay channel merging with Lionsgate had some truth to them.



RIHANNA, LIU: EVAN AGOSTINI/INVISION/AP. NOAH: RICH FURY/INVISION/AP. CARREY: AP PHOTO/JACQUES BRINON. ALBRECHT: MATT SAYLES/INVISION FOR STARZ ENTERTAINMENT/AP IMAGES.

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About Town
HOLLYWOOD HITS THE RED CARPET

Hammer Gala in the Garden
Los Angeles, Oct. 10

"IT'S SO STUNNING HERE," EVENT CO-CHAIR **Julia Roberts** declared to *THR* upon arriving at the Hammer Museum's fundraiser. The gathering was 600 strong of a demographic that was distinctly L.A., from artists to actors, philanthropists to fashionistas (many of the latter clad in designs by sponsor Bottega Veneta). **Diane Keaton** (feted with artist **Paul McCarthy** at the event hosted by **Jane Lynch** and featuring a performance by **Aloe Blacc**) displayed her trademark humility: "What have I done to warrant it?" she asked. **Patricia Arquette** had one answer: "The way she has moved through the world is like art. She's free, amazing and a life force." — CHRIS GARDNER





Salma Hayek Pinault and artist Mark Bradford at the event, where guests moved through gallery spaces to view the art and enjoy an air-conditioned respite from unseasonable heat.









1 From left: Elizabeth Banks, Sarah Paulson and Selma Blair. Said Paulson of honoree Keaton, "She has always encouraged me to shun the bullshit of this business."

2 From left: Steve Martin, Martin Short, the museum's Cynthia Burlingham and guest curator Andrew Hunter.

3 Kiernan Shipka (in Bottega Veneta).

4 Keaton (left) and Hammer Museum director Ann Philbin.

5 Will Ferrell (second from left) and wife Viveca were flanked by CAA's David Messinger and his wife, Amy.

The Walking Dead New York, Oct. 9



1 The show's Norman Reedus made an entrance at the season six premiere by riding a motorcycle to the stage.

2 From left: Charlie Collier, president and GM at AMC Networks and Sundance TV, the show's Andrew Lincoln, AMC CEO Josh Sapan and AMC COO Ed Carroll.

3 Castmember Danai Gurira.

4 The cast at Madison Square Garden.

SHIPKA: JORDAN STRAUSS/INVISION/AP. BANKS, MESSINGER, MARTIN, HAYEK: STEFANIE KEENAN/GETTY IMAGES/COURTESY OF HAMMER MUSEUM. KEATON: DONATO SARDELLA/GETTY IMAGES/COURTESY OF HAMMER MUSEUM. GURIRA, CAST, COLLIER, REEDUS: KEVIN MAZUR/GETTY IMAGES FOR AMC.

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MIKE JUDGE, ALEC BERG SILICON VALLEY

DAMON LINDELOF THE LEFTOVERS

DAN WEISS, DAVID BENIOFF GAME OF THRONES

JACK AMIEL, MICHAEL BEGLER, GREG JACOBS, STEVEN SODERBERGH THE KNICK – CINEMAX

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About Town

HOLLYWOOD HITS THE RED CARPET

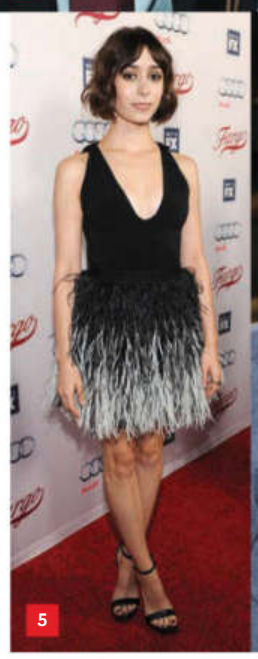
Fargo Los Angeles, Oct. 7













1 From left: Castmembers Patrick Wilson, Zahn McClarnon and Allan Dobrescu.

2 "You never get to sign on to something that you already know has a great pedigree," said season two's Kirsten Dunst (in Proenza Schouler).

3 FX Networks CEO John Landgraf (left) and executive producer Warren Littlefield, who said of season two: "We jump off a cliff, and we hope and pray. Our DNA is *Fargo*."

4 From left: The show's Bruce Campbell, showrunner Noah Hawley, Jean Smart and Bokeem Woodbine at the afterparty at Le Jardin.

5 Cristin Milioti at the premiere at the ArcLight.

6 Co-stars Jeffrey Donovan (left) and Angus Sampson.

7 Twin brothers and co-stars Brad Mann (left) and Todd Mann.



Barbara Davis' 85th Birthday

Beverly Hills, Oct. 9



1 "I was surprised and shocked, really," said Barbara Davis (with Sony Music's Clive Davis) at her party at Spago.

2 From left: Jane Fonda with her dog, Tulea, and her boyfriend, Richard Perry; Kenneth "Babyface" Edmonds; and David Foster, who accompanied the singer on piano for two songs.

3 Sidney Poitier (left) and Kenny Rickel, husband of Nancy Davis, Barbara's daughter.

LANDGRAF: WILSON, CAMPBELL, DUNST: RICHARD SHOTWELL/INVISION/AP. DONOVAN, MILIOTI, MANN: FRANK MICELOTTA/PICTUREGROUP/FX. BIRTHDAY: STEPHEN SIMONS/COURTESY OF NANCY DAVIS (3).

Congratulations

Mindy Kaling & Matt Warburton

2016 Power Showrunners

From your friends at Hulu

hulu

About Town

RAMBLING REPORTER *By Chris Gardner & Rebecca Ford*



"I thought it was an absolute miracle to be asked to do it and especially only with Ryan — it makes sense," says MacGraw about the *Love Letters* theater run that came out of this July 2014 spread.

The *Love* Goes On

Love Story stars **Ali MacGraw** and **Ryan O'Neal** are reuniting for the **Gregory Mosher**-directed play *Love Letters* opening Oct. 13 in the Wallis Annenberg Center's Bram Goldsmith Theater in Beverly Hills. It's a gig that has significance for MacGraw: "It's my first paying job since I left [Hollywood] for Santa Fe, N.M., 22 years ago." O'Neal says the idea came from producer **Nelle Nugent**, who noted the pair's chemistry in a 2014 *THR* photo. "We have this job because of *The Hollywood Reporter*," says O'Neal. "And now we're booked for the next several years." He's joking, but there will be a seven-city tour through June.


Mosher


Nugent

Scott Rudin Is Over the Sony Hack

In November, Sony Pictures fell victim to one of the biggest hacks in history, with emails on display for all to see, including **Scott Rudin**'s correspondence with then-studio co-chair **Amy Pascal**.

But nearly a year later, Rudin tells *THR* that he's totally moved on. "I don't think anyone's still grappling with it, honestly," the producer said during an Oct. 5 book bash for the *New York Post*'s **Michael Riedel**. Rudin insists it hasn't altered his business habits: "We were victims of a crime. I don't think [there's anything to change]."

Skinny-Dipping With Michael Jackson

It was the early 1980s, and **Michael Jackson** had come to visit **Jane Fonda** and **Katharine Hepburn** on the New Hampshire set of *On Golden Pond*. "[He] stayed for 10 days," recalled Fonda at an Oct. 7 talk at Loyola Marymount University. "When I asked [Hepburn's] permission — 'There's this … young singer that I would like to invite' [to the set] — she was not happy. Then the crew said, 'It's Michael Jackson!' I went skinny-dipping with him. … But she accepted him; he wanted to be a movie star — he had just finished doing *The Wiz*. He had a tape recorder, and every day in between scenes, she would pull over a chair for him and tell him stories."

Death (Star) by Chocolate

Star Wars fans awaiting the Dec. 18 release of *The Force Awakens* can satisfy cravings for a galaxy far, far away by visiting DTLA hotspot Faith & Flower. In early October, chef **Josh Graves** was at a Target when he spotted a Hot Wheels Millennium Falcon toy. It inspired him to make a mold for a white chocolate version. From there, he went on to make the Death Star, Darth Vader's helmet and little light sabers of absinthe candy. The items are an unlisted part of Faith & Flower's *mignardise* board, which includes honeycomb candy and chocolate truffles. Says Graves: "I told servers if someone seems like a fan of *Star Wars*, we'll send it out to them."



Faith & Flower's *Star Wars* chocolates.



Fonda also went skinny-dipping with Greta Garbo.

The Mummy a Ma'am?

Universal is resurrecting *The Mummy* as the kickoff to its planned monsters universe. But when it hits theaters (it's slated for March 24, 2017), there could be one noticeable change from director **Alex Kurtzman** and writer **Jon Spaihts**: The Mummy may be female, with a unique backstory. In the 1932 original and the 1999 remake, the monster was male, played by **Boris Karloff** and **Arnold Vosloo**, respectively. Sources say the gender in the new film, set in modern day, likely will depend on casting, expected to happen in the next couple of months. THR

Power Dining


Snider

Beyonce and **Jay Z** ate at Pizzeria Mozza, asking the restaurant to turn up the music so adjacent diners couldn't hear their conversation. … **Julia Louis-Dreyfus** rendezvoused with **Larry David** at Maison Giraud. … **Skip Brittenham** broke bread with **David Ellison** at The Palm. … **Queen Latifah** shared a table on the front patio of Magnolia with **Meagan Good**. … **Russell Simmons**, **Anjelica Huston** and **Mitch Glazer** and **Kelly Lynch** all were in at the Chateau Marmont at once. … **John Travolta** had the popcorn shrimp at Barton G. … **Michael Cera** hit Blair's. … **Adam Sandler** took a seat at the Dodgers' Dugout Club. … **Elle Fanning** ordered at PizzaRev in Studio City. … **Stacey Snider** visited Hinoki & the Bird. … **Michael De Luca** dined with WME's **Megan Silverman** at Mr Chow one day, then Latifah was there with producer **Shakim Compere** on another.



The Quick Pitch Blink-and-you-missed-it Yellowtail along the Sunset Strip has morphed into a similar Japanese-meets-everything melding of elaborate sushi rolls, truffle fries and quinoa "risotto." The veggie-heavy selection may seem healthy (a "street" corn dish involves tofu), but Maia then hits diners with its brick-sized chocolate chip cookie-and-chocolate pound cake dessert. See **George Hamilton** greeted by the faux-tan next generation on the patio.
The Inside Dish Mirabelle famously reigned at the address for more than four decades, drawing everyone including **Jim Morrison**, **Lana Turner** and **Quentin Tarantino**, who wrote part of *Pulp Fiction* there. *8768 Sunset Blvd.* — GARY BAUM

O'NEAL: AUSTIN HARGRAVE. MOSHER: AP PHOTO/JASON DECROW. NUGENT: CAROLYN CONTINO/BEIMAGES. CHOCOLATE: COURTESY OF FAITH & FLOWER. FONDA: RICHARD SHOTWELL/INVISION/AP. RESTAURANT: COURTESY OF SUBJECT. SNIDER: TODD WILLIAMSON/INVISION FOR *THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER*/AP IMAGES.

Got tips? Email **RAMBLING@THR.COM.**

CONGRATULATIONS

Peter Gould & Vince Gilligan



Scott M. Gimple



THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER'S 2015 TOP 50 SHOWRUNNERS

amc something more

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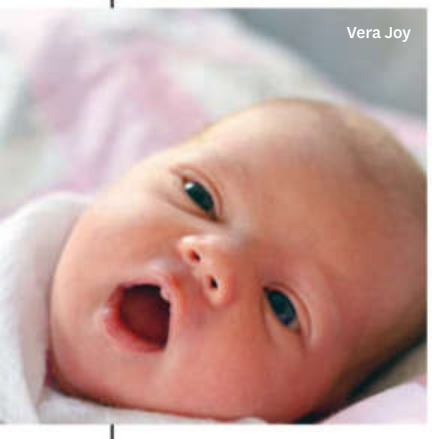

Greenwald and Mezo (in Galia Lahav).

GREENWALD & MEZO

Rob Greenwald, a talent publicist at Forefront Media, married Mandy Mezo on Oct. 10 at the Millennium Biltmore Hotel in Los Angeles in front of 175 guests. The couple, who became engaged in October 2014 in New York's Central Park, will honeymoon throughout the Mediterranean.

HITCHED, HATCHED, HIRED

Inside the industry's celebrations and news


Vera Joy

BIRTHS

Justin Nanfelt, manager of strategic insights and analytics at PMK·BNC, and his wife, Mary, welcomed daughter Vera Joy Nanfelt on Sept. 17 at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles.

CONGRATS

Paramount Pictures chairman and CEO **Brad Grey** has re-upped at the studio through 2020.

Deborah Barak was promoted to president of business operations for CBS News, CBS Entertainment and CBS Television Studios on Oct. 7.


Johnson

Jelani Johnson joined CAA as a motion picture literary agent Oct. 7.

Nora Skinner was tapped senior vp HBO programming Oct. 8.

Christian de Gallegos was appointed president of Green-Light International on Oct. 7.

ICM Partners named **Margo Liden** an agent in the global branded entertainment department Oct. 9.

Lesley Cerwin was promoted to senior vp entertainment publicity at NBC Entertainment on Oct. 12.

Lance Still joined A+E Networks as senior vp branded content, **Santosh Mathai** was elevated to vp data, analytics & strategic sales partnerships, **Ethan Heftman** and **Mary Kang** were promoted to vp ad sales, and **Kevin McGaw** was named vp ad sales marketing on Oct. 7.

Comedy Central hired **Steve Elliott** as vp branded entertainment development Oct. 12.

Imagine Entertainment named **Tyler Mitchell** senior vp motion pictures Oct. 12.

DEATHS

Larry Brezner, a manager and producer who was instrumental in the careers of comic legends Robin Williams and Billy Crystal, died Oct. 5 in Pasadena from complications of leukemia. He was 73.

Gene Allen, a three-term president of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences and an Oscar-winning art director on *My Fair Lady*, died Oct. 7 from natural causes. He was 97.

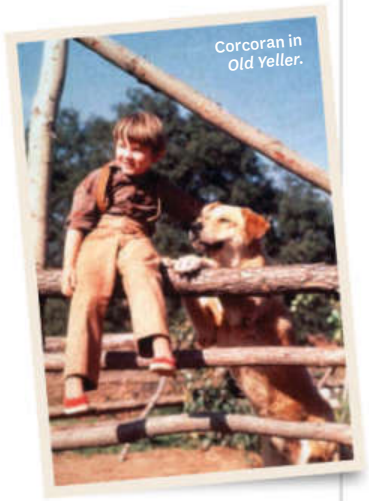

Albanese

Frank Albanese, who played Tony Soprano's uncle, the retired mobster Pat Blundetto, on *The Sopranos*, died Oct. 5 at a Staten Island hospice facility in New York. He was 84.

Hy Hollinger, who worked as a reporter and editor for *The Hollywood Reporter* and *Variety* for 36 years, died Oct. 7 at Olympia Medical Center in Los Angeles. He was 97.

Darrylin Zanuck de Pineda, the first-born child of 20th Century Fox founder Darryl F. Zanuck and silent-screen actress Virginia Fox, died Aug. 10. She was 84.

Kevin Corcoran, who played the younger brother in the 1957 Disney kids' classic *Old Yeller*, then became a co-producer on such TV series as *The Shield* and *Sons of Anarchy*, died Oct. 6 of colorectal cancer at Providence St. Joseph Medical Center in Burbank. He was 66.


Corcoran in *Old Yeller*.

Belgian director **Chantal Akerman**, an icon among European experimental filmmakers, died Oct. 5 in Paris. She was 65.

Jay Gerber, a character actor who appeared in *All in the Family* and *Dog Day Afternoon*, died Oct. 2 at his home in Los Angeles. He was 86.

BIRTHDAYS

OCT. 15
- Penny Marshall, 72
- Mira Nair, 58
- Haim Saban, 71
- Todd Solondz, 56

OCT. 16
- Charles Dolan, 89

OCT. 17
- Lawrence Bender, 58
- Felicity Jones, 32 ►
- Mike Judge, 53
- Rob Marshall, 55

OCT. 18
- Zac Efron, 28
- Chuck Lorre, 63
- Howard Shore, 69

OCT. 19
- Jon Favreau, 49
- Trey Parker, 46
- Jason Reitman, 38

OCT. 20
- Danny Boyle, 59
- Snoop Dogg, 44
- John Krasinski, 36



To submit, send email to **HHH@THR.COM.**

WEDDING: DMITRY SHUMANEV/COURTESY OF SUBJECT. BABY: COURTESY OF SUBJECT. JOHNSON: COURTESY OF CAA. ALBANESE: BOBBY BANK/WIREIMAGE. CORCORAN: WALT DISNEY PICTURES/PHOTOFEST. JONES: JOHN SHEARER/INVISION/AP.

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JOHN EISENDRATH
THE BLACKLIST

VINCE GILLIGAN
PETER GOULD
BETTER CALL Saul

ADAM F. GOLDBERG
the Goldbergs

RONALD D. MOORE
OUTLANDER

SONY PICTURES TELEVISION

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CEO, HULU

Mike Hopkins

The streaming giant's leader reveals the strategy behind his recent spending spree, why he isn't making original movies (or expanding overseas) and how shelling out a reported $700,000 per episode for *Seinfeld* makes sense

By Natalie Jarvey

WHEN LONGTIME FOX distribution executive Mike Hopkins took over as Hulu CEO in 2013, the first question employees asked was: "When are you building yourself an office?" Hopkins was the suit hired at the startup-like Hulu to replace firebrand founding CEO Jason Kilar, who departed after clashing with corporate owners 21st Century Fox, Disney and NBCUniversal. But Hopkins, 46, has avoided the executive suite and adopted a standing desk amid his 940 employees (though he does have a small conference room for private meetings). A UCLA business school grad who spent two years on the Hulu board before joining full time, Hopkins is charting the next chapter for the streamer, which has trailed Netflix and Amazon Prime both in subscribers and prestige. Still, Hulu earned $1 billion in revenue in 2013 and has grown its sub base to nearly 9 million in the U.S. Now, Hulu finally is addressing complaints about ads with a pricier commercial-free tier ($11.99, compared to $7.99), though there are no plans to completely abandon advertising. Meanwhile, Hopkins has given content chief Craig Erwich a mandate to spend competitively on programming. In the past year, Hulu has inked rich deals for exclusive streaming rights to *Seinfeld* and *South Park*, plus *Empire* and expansive pacts with Viacom and Epix. Hulu also has rolled out originals, including *The Mindy Project* (Sept. 15), revived after its Fox cancellation, and *Casual* from Jason Reitman (Oct. 7). On deck is ambitious hourlong fare from J.J. Abrams (*11/22/63*, starring James Franco) and Jason Katims (*The Way*, with Aaron Paul). The San Diego native, who lives in Santa Monica with his wife and 11-year-old daughter, invited *THR* to Hulu's headquarters at Santa Monica's Colorado Center to discuss the changes he's made and why he shelled out $700,000 an episode for nine seasons of *Seinfeld*.



Mementos from Hopkins' 16 years at Fox (including the network's NFL robot) are scattered near his desk. "Before I came [to Hulu], I'd say that I managed by walking around, but I sat in my office and everyone came to me," says Hopkins, photographed Sept. 14 at the Hulu offices in Santa Monica. "Here, I'm always walking to someone's desk."

In 2012, Hulu said it invested $500 million in content. How much is that number today?
Quite a bit higher. When you look at what we pay for our current-season content, the acquisitions we've been making — from *Seinfeld* to *South Park* to *Empire* to the output deals with FX, AMC and Turner — we're spending quite a bit. And we've really stepped up our originals. We're probably spending 10 times in our budget for next year what we were spending three years ago on originals.

Some said the $700,000 per episode you paid for *Seinfeld* was too much given that reruns are still on linear TV. Are they wrong?
I don't think the numbers are reported accurately. Well, I know they're not. Despite that, it's performed better than we ever expected. Subscribers have flocked to that show in ways that we haven't seen with any other show.

When Netflix's deal with Epix ended, you swooped in. Why were movies not a priority up until that point?
It's just a matter of what's available. When I look at the landscape, all the big studios' output has been committed for a long time to different outlets. So when we started this process, there just wasn't really anything to go after, unless it was a later library, which we have. We've got the Criterion Collection, and now we're adding Paramount, Lionsgate and MGM through Epix.

Will Hulu jump into original movies the way Netflix and Amazon have?
Movies are important for us, but I'm not sure we're at a point where we're going to be doing original movies.

What's the biggest surprise hit on Hulu?
The Mindy Project. We put seasons one and two up in spring 2014, and since that

GROOMING BY KENDAL SHANNON.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY Christina Gandolfo

VISIONARIES



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moment, it's become a top five show for us. So when it looked like Fox was not going to pick it up, we approached Mindy Kaling, and we're really happy to bring her show on because it was performing disproportionately well on Hulu than it was in the Nielsen ratings.

The Mindy Project premiered in September. Will you release ratings?
With our advertisers, we sell campaigns. So we do report back to them on how many impressions they got in which demo and which category. But we haven't publicly said, "Here's our top show, or here's how many streams we've received." The tendency would be for people to compare stream numbers or whatever metric we provide to Nielsen ratings, and we think it's totally apples and oranges. So we haven't done that.

Some have speculated that you priced your ad-free tier high to deter consumers from signing up. True?
We wanted to have two products, two different price points that we thought were really good values to consumers. We have the $7.99 price point with the limited commercial playing, so the commercial-free plan had to be more, right? We tried to pick a price, based on a lot of research and a lot of analytics, that would maximize the value for all customers. We're happy regardless of which plan a customer chooses.

Are you doing anything about complaints that Hulu airs the same ads over and over?
We actually do have caps on frequency. We're working hard to make sure that those are enforced and that no more than two of the same creative [ads] show up in any episode. But people can watch three or four episodes of the same show, and then they'll get multiple creatives in that instance. We're working to try to make sure that our overall ad experience, including repetition, is better and better.

Netflix is growing overseas. Is international expansion a focus for Hulu?
We'll see. It's not something that we're focused on at the moment, but I wouldn't be surprised if we don't look around the globe in the next year or two and see where else we should be.

What needed to change at Hulu when you took over?
Well, we weren't investing in content, so we've done that. We had just received additional funding from our ownership right when I started, so we were able to take some of that funding and really deploy it. The overall strategy of the company wasn't really set, either, so we spent a lot of time on that: building out the plan for what kinds of content we would buy, what our marketing strategy would be. And for about a year now we've been executing against it.

Kilar was vocal about the frustrations that Hulu's corporate structure created. Have you experienced those same problems?
It's night and day. I don't think we have any issues there today. We couldn't be doing what we're doing if it wasn't for the support of Fox, NBC and ABC.

Before you came to Hulu, there was talk of an IPO or sale, but the owners reinvested. That money has to run out at some point, so will an exit be on the table again?
At this point, we're really just focused on building the business. So I don't think any of those outcomes are really something that Fox or Disney or NBC are going to think about until we've built it. That's what we're focused on.

The companies that Hulu licenses content from are now launching their own streaming services. How does that impact you?
I'm not sure we know how it's affected Hulu yet. It's all so fresh in the last several months. But it's probably positive because what you're seeing is people learning that they can get access to content on the very same devices that we're available on. If you fire up your Apple TV, we're right there along with a lot of other folks. In many ways, we're out ahead of a lot of people with respect to our distribution footprint.

How would the possibility of Apple entering the original content game change the relationship you have with the company?
Well, I'm not sure, but I don't foresee there being any conflicts. If you look at Amazon Fire TV, we're prominently distributed there as well, and Amazon Prime Instant Video is a competitor of ours. [Apple's] primary business is selling hardware, so my assumption is they'll always be supportive of us and we'll be working closely with them.

What's your favorite _Seinfeld_ episode?
It's probably the famous one with the puffy shirt. When I would communicate with people at the different companies that we were negotiating with for _Seinfeld_, that was always the subject of my email: Puffy Shirt. It was like a code name. THR

1 After Hopkins closed the *Seinfeld* SVOD deal, Sony gifted him a limited-edition photo of the cast during the last day on set.
2 Hopkins was part of the Fox team that helped bring in Hulu co-owner Disney in 2009.
3 Hulu hallways are named after TV streets, including ones from *Family Guy* and *Sesame Street* near Hopkins' desk.
4 "You don't see Bart [Simpson] that way very often," says Hopkins, who prefers running and golfing over skateboarding.









Damon,

Congratulations
on being named one of
The Hollywood Reporter's
2015 Power Showrunners

(we already knew this…)

myman greenspan fineman
fox rosenberg & light llp

When the 'M' in Team Doesn't Stand for Money

Writers rooms, once confined to TV, now are popping up on film franchises like *Transformers* and *Star Wars*, and the impact on guild credits (and compensation) could be severe By Rebecca Ford

WRITERS ROOMS HAVE been a staple of TV series since the dawn of the medium. And lately, movies are borrowing the practice. As integrated "cinematic universes" become increasingly important to film studios, groups of screenwriters working on the same property have sprung up for everything from Paramount's *Transformers* franchise to Disney and Lucasfilm's *Star Wars* films and Universal's monsters universe.

However, some writers, representatives and guild members are concerned about the issues that could arise when these films are finished and writers expect to see their names credited. "The idea of a writers room on a theatrical motion picture creates a whole litany of issues with respect to compensation and credits," warns Lesley Mackey, senior director of credits at the WGA West.

Credits on any film with multiple writers already can prompt a complicated process, with big implications for careers and compensation. Disagreements are resolved through WGA arbitration (but only after the movie has completed production), which provides specific rules for how to divvy up authorship. A writers-room dispute hasn't been brought to the WGA yet, but with up to a dozen writers pitching ideas in a room and sketching out characters and sequences, that opens up the process to conflicts, insiders say. For instance, only three writers (or a maximum of three teams of no more than three writers) can be credited as writers of a screenplay. The WGA can give out a special waiver to make writing teams more than three people, but the only instance of a team ever being as large as, say, a dozen writers has been for the final episode of a TV series.

TV shows are able to dole out episodes to many writers to avoid credit clashes (and writers often get a producer credit on the series). But when there's only one film in a franchise every year or two, scoring a credit can be crucial because it determines how much a writer makes, especially in residuals. The more writers listed, the lower the percentage of residuals for each. And if a writer isn't listed at all, he or she is out of luck.

"Big-budget franchise fare is a major priority for the studios, and if a writer can become involved with, or better yet get credit on, one of these films, it's huge for their career," says Darin Friedman, partner at Management 360, whose clients have written for DC and Marvel movies. "That said, these projects often come with higher stakes and more challenging development processes."


Goldsman


Kurtzman

For *Transformers*, screenwriter Akiva Goldsman gathered 12 writers for two weeks on the Paramount lot to conceive ideas for spinoffs, sequels and other ways to expand the universe. They wrote treatments and pitched them to Goldsman, Steven Spielberg and Paramount execs. Financially, it was a good gig: Sources say, depending on their quotes, writers were paid about $200,000 for two weeks of work. And at least one team was hired to create a full script for their idea: Andrew Barrer and Gabriel Ferrari, who will pen an animated film based on the Transformers' home planet of Cybertron. If Paramount moves forward with any of the other treatments, the writers will get first stab at the script. In addition, Goldsman is taking the work done by the brain trust to write *Transformers 5*, but some insiders wonder how those credits would play out.

From what's known about the top-secret *Star Wars* group, it functions similarly, with a few key people (writer-producer Simon Kinberg and writers Michael Arndt and Lawrence Kasdan) meeting at Skywalker Ranch for a week last year to hash out ideas for future stories and spinoffs. While Arndt originally was hired to write *Episode VII: The Force Awakens*, Kasdan and director J.J. Abrams eventually took over and are the credited writers. Kinberg, Abrams and Kasdan continue to serve as consultants, along with a few key Lucasfilm execs, who weigh in on stories for upcoming films.

Universal's monsters universe seems to be forming in reverse fashion. Instead of scribes being hired to spitball ideas for movies with the Mummy, Dracula and Wolfman, each of the writers — including Noah Hawley (FX's *Fargo*), Aaron Guzikowski (*Prisoners*) and Ed Solomon (*Now You See Me*) — was assigned a specific script to write, and all of them will be overseen by franchise keepers Alex Kurtzman and Chris Morgan. The writers have offices on the lot and meet periodically as a group, say sources. The hope is that by giving each of them his (or her) own script, clear boundaries will be established for credits.

Most reps and guild insiders say that writers rooms are the lesser of two evils when compared to another recent trend: dual track development. Several studios, under pressure to figure out a script when a film already has a release date, are hiring multiple writers to work on separate scripts for the same movie, including Warner Bros.' *Wonder Woman* (up to five writers hired at the same time, say sources) and *Aquaman* and Sony's *21 Jump Street* female spinoff. "Even after a studio picks a script, I can't imagine that they won't try to borrow parts of the other script as well," says one rep.

Because the likelihood of their clients getting official credit on a project dims when a "dual track" or writers room is involved, many reps say they're trying to get their clients as much upfront money as they can. Says one lit agent: "When it comes to these big franchises, studios are under pressure to make them work, but we've got to make sure our clients aren't being cheated because of it." THR



ILLUSTRATION BY Tomi Um

GOLDSMAN: DAVID FISHER/REX/REX USA. KURTZMAN: RICHARD SHOTWELL/INVISION/AP.

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From left: John Hurt in *The Last Panthers*, Gillian Anderson and David Duchovny in the new *X-Files* and Jennifer Carpenter in *Limitless*.

'It's a Bubble, and ... It's Going to Pop'

An unprecedented frenzy of dealmaking at MIPCOM prompts veterans to wonder if 'peak drama' means the global TV market has hit its limit By Scott Roxborough

AFTER A DISAPPOINTING BERLIN MARKET, a weak Cannes and a tepid Toronto, the buzz in the worldwide film business isn't great. Those who want evidence that television, not movies, now is king need only look at the staggering activity at this year's MIPCOM international TV market.

Even as ratings dip at U.S. networks and there are signs of weakness in some European territories, the Cannes streets during MIPCOM had the giddy feel of a boomtown. A devastating storm that hit the region just before the market — killing 20 people and prompting the cancellation of opening night festivities — failed to put a damper on MIP, where international buyers come to select shows for their networks or streaming services.

Market veterans say the number of drama projects introduced was unprecedented: Mark Gordon, producer of *Criminal Minds* and *Grey's Anatomy*, will make a new FBI procedural, *Darkness Falls*, together with German network ProSiebenSat.1; *Game of Thrones* producer Frank Doelger and Jonathan Stamp (*Rome*) will team for an original fantasy epic titled *The Perished Land*; John Woo will executive produce a noir crime series with Brit director Alex Garcia Lopez (*Misfits*); and French network TF1 and Germany's RTL are joining forces to bankroll an ambitious, and potentially controversial, 10-part drama series on the life of Hitler.

"It's too much!" joked Tracey Ullman, pointing to an ad for yet another new *GOT*-style fantasy series. "What could I play in one of these things? The ugly witch?" The veteran comic was at MIP promoting her new BBC series, *The Tracey Ullman Show*, one of several shows the British broadcaster touted.

There were plenty of people warning that "peak drama" — the point when TV production supply exceeds demand — is coming. "We know that it's a bubble, and we know it's going to pop," says Fox International's Sharon Tal Yguado — but the buyers kept buying dramas, which far outpaced comedy and unscripted format sales.

Deals were everywhere, with big U.S. series like CBS Studios' *Limitless*, Sony TV's *The Player*, *The Muppets* from Disney and Fox's *The X-Files* reboot (which had its world premiere at MIPCOM — a first for a major network series) selling out worldwide. There were plenty of U.S. deals for foreign series, too: European crime drama *The Last Panthers* went to Sundance TV, A+E bought Brit horror series *The Frankenstein Chronicles* and Esquire Network scooped up *Beowulf*, a U.K. fantasy epic.

Independent film companies, who just a few years back wouldn't have been caught dead slumming at a TV market, were front and center on the Croisette. The Weinstein Co. (sans Harvey) was there to present its big-budget period drama *War and Peace*, while Germany's Constantin Film screened *ShadowHunters: The Mortal Instruments*, the TV adaptation of its (flopped) YA fantasy feature. Luc Besson's EuropaCorp Television Studios, launched last year, used MIP to announce three new shows with three networks: NBC's straight-to-series order for *Taken*, an adaptation of the Liam Neeson action film franchise; and pilots for Fox (the pre-apocalyptic drama *These Final Hours*) and ABC (corporate thriller *Janus*). Besson also confirmed that he will, for the first time, write and produce an original TV series. "We have literally doubled the size of our stand [at MIPCOM] — we are expanding rapidly," says Stuart Baxter, president of eOne Television International. The company came to the market with the blockbuster series *Fear the Walking Dead* and *Into the Badlands*.

Baxter believes the boom in TV drama is driven primarily by the decline in feature films on television. "The number of slots for movies on TV has dropped so dramatically around the world, and TV drama is filling a lot of that space," he says. "You are seeing a lot of film talent switching to TV because of that."

Of course, another reason is the rise of streaming video outlets, particularly Netflix and Amazon, which have poured money into original production. At MIP, Netflix announced its first Italian series — a Mafia drama that the web giant will produce with RAI, Italy's conservative public broadcaster.

The online video boom also has added another revenue stream for content producers. CBS, for example, after selling first-window rights for its series *Zoo* to free-TV broadcasters worldwide, inked a lucrative second-window deal with Netflix. Traditional networks — in the U.S. and internationally — love to criticize Netflix, but the reality is that the streaming behemoth not only has helped create the new market for television content but continues to drive up prices (and volume) as others attempt to compete.

"All the traditional broadcasters are also doing their own SVOD services," says Armando Nunez, president and CEO of the CBS global distribution group. "It doesn't behoove any of us in the distribution business to do things that will cannibalize existing partnerships. We have to figure this out together." THR



The Frankenstein Chronicles

5 Game-Changing Deals From MIPCOM

DARKNESS FALLS
Grey's Anatomy and *Criminal Minds* producer Mark Gordon set up *Darkness Falls* with Germany's ProSiebenSat.1. With few U.S. networks making procedurals, more talent will look overseas where these shows still are hot.

EUROPACORP SERIES
With a series deal with NBC (*Taken*) and pilot orders from Fox (*These Final Hours*) and ABC (*Janus*), Luc Besson's shingle takes to the next level the European small-screen invasion begun by Gaumont and StudioCanal.

FALSE FLAG
Fox's worldwide deal for a foreign-language series (Fox International already has remake rights to the Israeli spy show) will be the first of many such global plays by the studios.

THE FRANKENSTEIN CHRONICLES
A+E picking up ITV's *Frankenstein Chronicles* is further proof that second-tier cable players are hungry for Euro drama. Even Esquire Network got into the act, pouncing on ITV's *Beowulf*.

SUBURRA
The public-private partnership model between Netflix and Italian public broadcaster RAI for their new Mafia drama could become standard for Netflix as it expands abroad (to China, for instance).

PANTHERS: COURTESY OF STUDIO CANAL. X-FILES: ED ARAQUEL/FOX. LIMITLESS: MICHAEL PARNELLEE/CBS. FRANKENSTEIN: COURTESY OF MCAINSH CONSULTING LTD.

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Sophisticated silhouettes and sleek tailoring take once off-duty denim from playtime attire to power dressing

By Carol McColgin



Pumped Up

Gianvito Rossi point-toe heels; $660, *netaporter.com*

PHOTOGRAPHED BY Joseph Shin



1. Skirt Around
Victoria Beckham
Denim pencil skirt; $395,
mytheresa.com

2. Shell Game
Victoria Beckham
Denim peplum top; $325,
netaporter.com

3. Not Blue Jeans
The Row stretch-denim leggings; $450, at Neiman Marcus, Beverly Hills

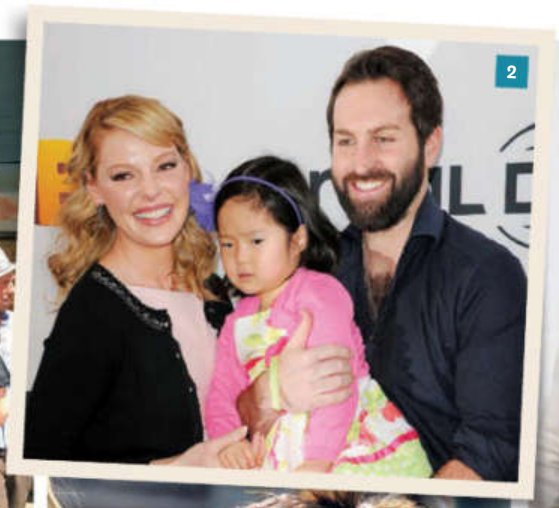
4. Chic Shirtdress
Tomas Maier coated dress; $895, at Barneys New York and *barneys.com*

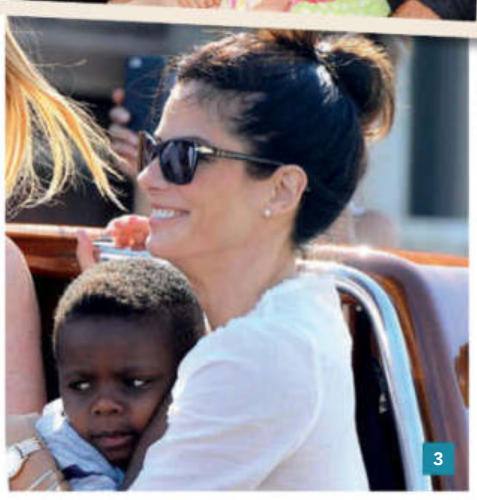
PROP STYLING BY ANTHONY A. ALTOMARE AT BUFFALO ART CO.

THE ADOPTION SQUEEZE HITS HOLLYWOOD

'People think it's as simple as going to Ralphs and picking a baby off the shelf,' says one prospective parent, as foreign countries shut down the pipeline and pricey consultants rush to fill domestic demand in a process where even a big name (probably) can't get you an infant any faster By Kalee Thompson


1


2


3


4


5

1 Jackman and wife Deborra-Lee Furness with adopted kids Ava and Oscar.
2 Katherine Heigl, husband Josh Kelley and daughter Nancy "Naleigh" Leigh.
3 Bullock and her son, Louis Bardo.
4 Cruise with his children Isabella and Connor.
5 With husband Julius Tennon, Viola Davis adopted her first child, Genesis, now 4, domestically in 2011.

BY LAST WINTER, WHEN Emmy-nominated cinematographer **Joia Speciale** flew to San Antonio to meet the woman who would give birth to her daughter, she had been trying to become a parent for a decade. She'd done IVF. She'd attended a seminar about foster adoption. She'd turned to international adoption, but weeks before she was to meet a 16-month-old girl in an Uzbekistan orphanage, that country banned U.S. adoptions. "That child disappeared," says Speciale. "It took me months to recover from that." She hired **David Ellis**, a lawyer whose Brentwood firm, Adoptions First, has worked with The Beach Boys' **Brian Wilson**, **Jeffrey Tambor** and **Howie Mandel**. Ellis found a 20-year-old Texas woman who already had two children and was seven months pregnant. "She seemed very certain," says Speciale. "She was really poor and didn't have a job. Her boyfriend was in and out of jail." On her second trip to Texas, Speciale flew back to L.A. with the mother, who never had been on a plane, and her two little boys.

Relocation is not uncommon among Ellis' clients: "Once they get here, they get terrific medical care. It increases the success rate substantially — the birth mother is isolated from a negative environment," i.e., unsupportive family members. Speciale put the mother and her children up in a Manhattan Beach hotel and hired professional birth-mother companion **Darcy Hall** at $35 an hour. Hall kept the family of three entertained — at the beach, out to lunch — while Speciale shot episodes of a reality show. But by the time the mother went into labor with Speciale's gynecologist at Cedars-Sinai, they had bonded, says Speciale: "It was like I had three children, and one of them was a pregnant teenage girl."

After an emergency cesarean section, Speciale got to cut the umbilical cord, and the birth mom flew back to Texas two days later. Speciale covered her expenses from the time they were matched until three months after the birth: "I took her maternity shopping. I bought her kids a wardrobe of clothes." In all, the birth mom's expenses totaled $20,000, the adoption nearly $55,000. Speciale will send the birth mom pictures annually. Baby Rose is now 9 months old.

Hollywood, where so many of the progeny of A-listers seem to have been plucked from foreign lands or domestic parts unknown for a glamorous SoCal existence, has created the perception that adoptable babies are available to anyone with the heart. The truth is, adoption, which often takes years, is neither easy nor cheap. "I want to

JACKMAN: PAUL FENTON/ZUMA PRESS/NEWSCOM. HEIGL: JASON LAVERIS/FILMMAGIC/GETTY IMAGES. BULLOCK: INFIT-06/INFPHOTO.COM/NEWSCOM. CRUISE: LIONEL HAHN/MCT/NEWSCOM. DAVIS: TODD WILLIAMSON/INVISION/AP.

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The Hollywood Reporter's 2015 Power Showrunners

CAA

smash my head against the wall when people ask why somebody doesn't 'just adopt,' like it's as simple as going to Ralphs and picking up a baby off the shelf," says **Kimberly James**, a production coordinator who was priced out of traditional adoption. Of course, for many in the town, cost is not a barrier: **Steven Spielberg**, **Amy Pascal**, Lucasfilm president **Kathleen Kennedy**, HBO programming president **Michael Lombardo**, former HBO head **Sue Naegle** and *Scandal* creator **Shonda Rhimes** are adoptive parents, as are megastars **Tom Cruise**, **Madonna**, **Sandra Bullock**, **Charlize Theron**, **Hugh Jackman** and, of course, **Brad Pitt** and **Angelina Jolie**, whose brood of six — three adopted from Cambodia, Ethiopia and Vietnam — reportedly is soon to include a little sibling from Syria.

Regardless of means, international adoptions have plummeted during the past few years and are not likely to rise again. In 2014, there were 6,441 international adoptions in the U.S. (including 402 in California), down from a high of 23,000 in 2004. Russia shut down U.S. adoptions after a Tennessee mom bought her 7-year-old adopted son a one-way ticket back to Moscow in 2010, and the discovery of "baby selling" schemes has slowed or stopped the number of children leaving Cambodia, Ethiopia, Vietnam, Nepal and Guatemala. The easing of China's one-child policy — long a key source of adopted daughters for Americans — quartered the number of adoptions from 2005 (8,000) to 2014 (2,040). The country now bans single people, those over 50 and those with a body mass index above 40 from adopting. Family law attorney **Susan Wiesner**, whose clients have included musician **Ben Harper** in his divorce from **Laura Dern**, brought her daughter **Jane** home in 2003, just before China banned single women from adopting; the country made Wiesner sign a declaration stating she was not gay.

My Big Fat Greek Wedding's **Nia Vardalos** and her husband, *Cougar Town*'s **Ian Gomez**, have been on waiting lists for Greece and China for more than four years (they happily adopted their first child via the U.S. foster system and are on the waiting list to adopt another child from L.A. County). The family's celebrity does not affect its place on the list, says Vardalos, who encountered one



Garson with son Nathan, now 14.

FOST-ADOPT: THE FASTEST WAY TO A FAMILY IN LOS ANGELES

By Degen Pener

ON APRIL 14, KIRSTEN SCHAFFER, THE NEW EXECUTIVE director of Women in Film, and her wife, **Linda Kennedy**, began fostering — in hope of adopting — a 6-month-old baby girl whose biological mother, says Schaffer carefully, "just doesn't have the stability to be able to take care of her." They are part of a growing number of people in the entertainment industry becoming parents via what's called fost-adopt. The process works like this: Children in the foster system have been taken from their biological families, usually because of abuse, incarceration, homelessness or substance abuse. Once in custody of the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), they can be placed with a foster family hoping to adopt. Biological parents can be given six months to two years to prove to a judge that they are responsible caretakers, often with visitation rights of two to three times a week. If, say, the biological parents fail to kick a drug habit, then their rights can be terminated, and the foster parents can adopt with complete parental rights. (Before then, they are given a monthly stipend, about $800, and state-provided health care if desired.) "The majority of our friends who have done this have ended up adopting their foster kid," says Schaffer, who is awaiting an Oct. 23 hearing.

Despite the uncertainty of whether foster children will stay with them, many parents are drawn to fost-adopt because of the urgent need. During the past year, Los Angeles County had 35,000 children in foster care — more than any other county in the nation — of which 1,463 were adopted (half went to relatives) and 5,500 were reunited with their biological parents, according to L.A.-based RaiseAChild.US, which provides free services to prospective foster-adoptive parents. Single men and women and gay couples are welcomed at DCFS and at nonprofit social-work agencies such as Aviva, Five Acres, ExtraordinaryFamilies and The Village Family Services.

Revolutionary Releasing vp **Tamar Chafets** tried domestic adoption for nine months as a single mother. She never was picked. "I was told moms rarely pick a single woman. They feel, 'Why should she be able to do this if I can't?'" In 2011, Chafets became a foster mom to 8-day-old Charlotte and, in 2013, her adoptive mother. "This is anecdotal, but the number of people who ask us how they can do this is up dramatically," says **Andy Spahn**, a Hollywood political consultant who with wife **Jennifer Perry**, founder of the foster advocacy group Children's Action Network, adopted their two 20-something daughters out of the foster system when they were 8 and 10.

Becoming certified to be a foster parent can take at least two months, with fingerprinting, background checks, home safety studies, social-worker interviews, parenting classes and CPR/first aid classes. Once the process is complete, placements can happen quickly, especially if parents are willing to take older children. Executive producer/commercial production company partner **Ned Brown** and his now-ex-husband became foster parents to a nearly 1-year-old boy only seven weeks after their first certification class. Today, they share custody of the now-10-year-old. "I firmly believe it's the best thing I ever did," says Brown. Sometimes the outcome goes the other way. A year ago, **Steve Ledoux**, a marketing exec at NBCUniversal, and his husband began fostering a 2½-year-old boy, who likely will move back in with his biological mother in November. "The mother insists she wants us to continue to be a part of her son's life — we are the only Daddy and Papa in his life," says Ledoux. Regardless, he adds, "you have to realize you are making such a difference in that child's life."

For the past three years, a campaign called FosterMore — spearheaded by Disney/ABC Television Group and its executive director of corporate citizenship and social responsibility, **David Ambroz** (a former foster child) and co-chaired by Perry — has done awareness work around fostering, filming PSAs with stars like **Ty Burrell**. "The words people associated with foster care were 'damaged' and 'criminal' and 'drugs,'" says Ambroz. "We started telling another narrative to show how resilient and amazing these kids are and how much potential they have." Studies show that exposure to drugs in the womb does not necessarily make for long-term health problems. "People are fearful that a baby is a biological duplicate of their parent, and that is really not true," says comedy writer **Andrea Abbate**, a consulting producer on ABC Family's *Young & Hungry*. Abbate and her husband began fostering a 13-year-old in 2011 and within months adopted the now-17-year-old. "He's a wonderful kid and getting straight A's in school," she says. You don't need to persuade *White Collar* actor **Willie Garson**, a single straight man who adopted his son, **Nathan**, at age 7 after a year of fostering. "It was about the third playdate, and when I showed up he jumped into my arms and was hugging me and would not let go," he says. Nathan is now 14. Says Garson, "It's just another way to make a family."

UNITED STATES

136,000
Total adoptions in 2014

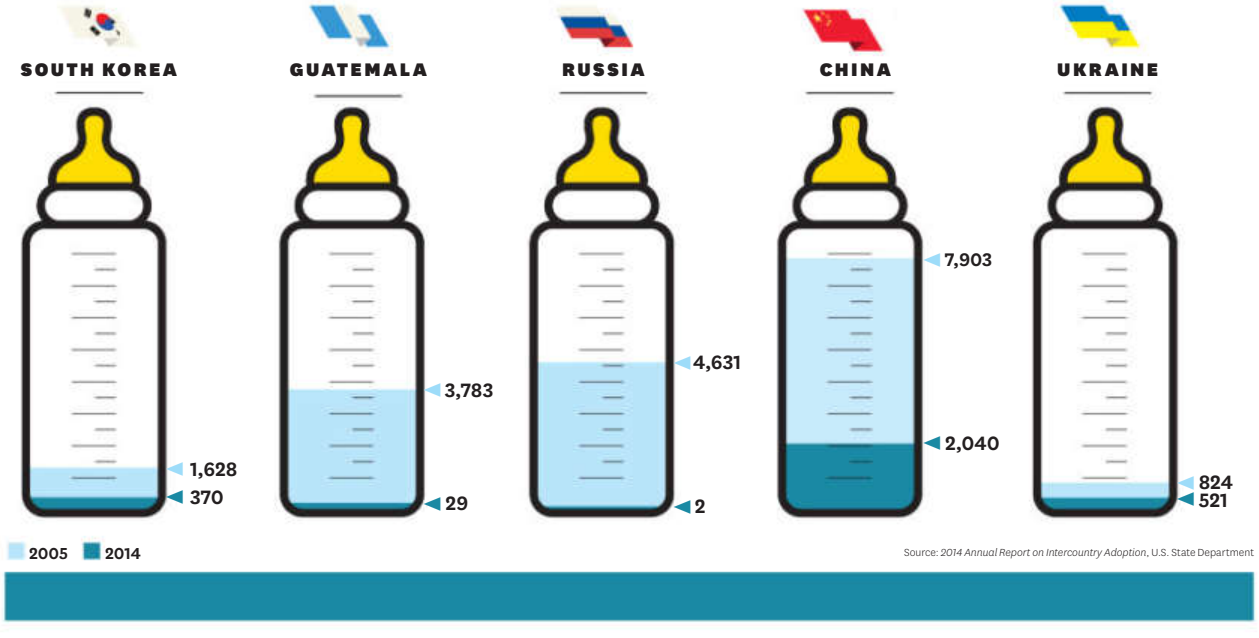
41%
Foster

46%
Domestic adoptions

13%
International adoptions

THE DRASTIC DROP IN FOREIGN ADOPTIONS

The number of babies adopted by Americans from China, Guatemala, Russia and Ukraine is less than half of what it was a decade ago, increasing demand for domestic adoptions



Source: *2014 Annual Report on Intercountry Adoption*, U.S. State Department

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AND WE SALUTE OUR CLIENT

EDDIE MURPHY
ON RECEIVING THE 2015 MARK TWAIN PRIZE FOR AMERICAN HUMOR

private adoption attorney who told her he could move her to the top of his list if she wrote a hefty check. **Gelila Assefa Puck**, wife of **Wolfgang Puck**, who runs a school for AIDS orphans in her native Ethiopia, believes the decline in foreign adoptions is a good thing: Americans should, in effect, "adopt the whole family" by providing financial support and maintaining contact. "You are forced to give up your child because of hunger, because of religion that won't let you take a birth control pill," she says. "It's a terrible place to be." Meanwhile, in the U.S., teen birth rates have declined by more than 30 percent during the past 25 years (California's teen birth rate is lower than the national average, with 26.5 births per 1,000 girls).

It all adds up to more competition for every baby adopted. There's an army of specialists to match prospective parents with a shrinking number of birth moms and babies. Many would-be parents enlist a private adoption lawyer like Ellis or a facilitator who can be paid tens of thousands of dollars in fees. There also are all-service agencies, like Vista Del Mar near Century City. The birth mother typically selects among prospective parents, who market themselves with a photo album. "It's true that people who are more attractive tend to get selected more quickly," says adoption consultant **Nicole Witt**, who charges a $2,950 flat fee and describes her job as being "like a wedding planner for adoption." Witt helps clients create profile books. Pro tips: Include playful pictures of yourself with photogenic nieces and nephews; don't wear your Ivy League sweatshirt (too elitist). Typically, a lawyer or agency will show a pregnant woman three to five books that meet criteria she has specified.

In most cases, she will play a role in the new family's life. "A system based on shame and secrecy is being dismantled," says Donaldson Adoption Institute CEO **April Dinwoodie**, who adds that 95 percent of domestic adoptions now involve contact between birth mother and adoptive family. But a match can feel too open. Former Food Network judge **Tony Spatafora** and his husband, actor **Michael Vinton**, hired an adoption lawyer and found a potential match, a high school student due in June. Like the couple, she lived in Sherman Oaks. "She was looking to place with a same-sex couple because she wanted to feel like the only mother this baby will have," says Vinton, a not-uncommon desire among young birth moms. Then they learned she liked them precisely because she could ride her bike to their house quickly. Says Vinton, whose idea of "open" was once- or twice-a-year contact, "The thought was a little startling." The mother ended up choosing another gay couple, and Vinton and Spatafora still are waiting for a baby.



1 Mariska Hargitay and husband Peter Hermann's biological son, August, is flanked by Andrew (left) and Amaya, adopted domestically within six months of each other in 2011.
2 Theron with her first child, Jackson, whom she adopted from South Africa in 2012. She adopted a daughter, August, domestically in July.
3 Britton adopted her son, Yoby, from Ethiopia in 2011.

When *Damages* actor **Jeff Binder** and his husband, Kidz Bop music producer **Mike Anderson**, decided to adopt in 2012, their facilitator suggested they place a *PennySaver* ad in such adoption-friendly states as Florida, Arizona and Pennsylvania. " 'Adoption-friendly' meaning friendly to us and, unfortunately, unfriendly to the birth mother," says Anderson. In states like New York, a birth mother has as long as 45 days to change her mind; in Florida, that window is only 72 hours. The couple's ad was not explicit that they were gay: "Broadway actor and children's music producer yearn for miracle baby," it read. (Anderson: "It's Hallmark-awful, but that's what works.") A few months later, their facilitator matched them with a woman from Florida who signed the paperwork after giving birth, and Anderson and Binder drove back to New York with their days-old daughter.

Their birth mother was only 14, but nationally, teen birth mothers no longer are the norm. By the time one TV creative exec unsuccessfully had finished fertility treatments, she was in her early 50s. She and her husband turned to facilitator **Nikki Biers** of The Best Gift Adoptions in Woodland Hills. "You pay a one-time fee [$9,000], and she matches you with a birth mom within two years," says the exec. The one Biers found was from Las Vegas and in her 40s, with kids of her own. "Being an older parent, I really was hoping we'd find a child with an [emotionally mature] birth mother," adds the exec, whose son is now 4.

Although avoiding ties to birth families is among the motivations that historically drew Americans abroad, **Weezer** bassist **Scott Shriner** and his wife, writer **Jillian Lauren**, were grateful when their adoption agency arranged for them to meet their son's birth mother, a teenager from a village in Ethiopia, in 2008. "When I saw a photo album of Ethiopia, I knew that's where our son was," says Lauren. For their son, **Tariku**, the transition to Eagle Rock initially was grueling. A biter and screamer, he was expelled from nursery school. After consultations with a dozen experts, he was diagnosed with PTSD stemming from early separation from his birth mother and institutionalization in an orphanage (he's now fine and clamoring for a little brother). Adoption pediatrician **Jane Aronson**, who has worked with the Jolie-Pitts, **Mary-Louise Parker** and **Connie Britton**, estimates that a child loses a month of developmental skills for every three months they live in an orphanage. Adopted kids often have issues unfamiliar to U.S. pediatricians, including "malnutrition, developmental delays, attachment issues [and] exposure to infectious disease," says Aronson.

While Tariku's parents couldn't feel more blessed, emerging host programs such as Frontier Horizon and Project 143 (named for the approximately 143 million orphans worldwide) allow parents to get to know adoptable kids in advance. After a sabbatical to volunteer at orphanages in Ukraine, Plan A event-production firm owner **Tarin Wilson**, her husband and their biological daughter connected with 9-year-old **Nastja** from Latvia. "We hosted her [around] Christmas for five weeks. She went back to the orphanage and then came back that summer and the next Christmas," says Wilson. "You really get to see what an important, life-changing decision would be like." (Each visit cost Wilson about $2,750 to cover travel, chaperones and insurance.) The adoption was finalized 2½ years later, and Nastja now is a thriving SoCal teenager. Wilson believes industry parents are ideal hosts: "They have the means and the interest. You could sign up now, and this Christmas a child could be coming into your home." THR

HARGITAY: PAUL BRUINOOGE/PATRICK MCMULLAN.COM; THERON, BRITTON: SPLASH NEWS/CORBIS.

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WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE *Enfant Terrible* GETS AN *Enfant*

Two kids, three shows and a massive eight-figure deal. At home and on set with TV's top provocateur **Ryan Murphy** as he peels back the complicated layers of his tortured past — and reveals what's coming next: 'It's not a battle anymore'

By **Lacey Rose** • Photographed by **Miller Mobley**



"My work, for good or for bad, is about mixing lightness with darkness," says Murphy, photographed Oct. 8 on the *American Horror Story: Hotel* stage on the Fox lot in Los Angeles.

Styling by **JENNY RICKER**
Burberry tuxedo, Tom Ford shirt.



I had been properly warned: Ryan Murphy asks a *lot* of questions.

There are the innocuous ones, like the "What do you know?" that will begin nearly every conversation you have with him. You'll scramble for an appropriate response until you realize he's just pumping you for gossip. There are the intensely personal ones, about your fears, your family or whatever else he has you revealing before you realize you're telling him things you haven't told your closest friends. And there are the more self-serving ones, where he's looking for — craving, even — feedback on his television shows, of which he now has three: Fox's *Scream Queens*, FX's *American Horror Story: Hotel* and the forthcoming anthology series *American Crime Story: The People vs. O.J. Simpson*. A favorite, "Is it going to be a hit?"

It's an early October day, and Murphy is between takes on the 10th and final episode of *American Crime Story* on a Los Angeles soundstage when he lobs this last one at me. At his insistence, I'd just watched the first two episodes of the series so hotly anticipated that multiple Murdochs have attended private screenings, and suddenly I'm his one-woman focus group. "What popped for you?" he asks, with childlike excitement. Cuba Gooding Jr., I tell him, makes an excellent O.J. "Mmm-hmm." And Sarah Paulson is terrific as Marcia Clark. "What else? What surprised you?" There's a subtlety to the series, I say, which I hadn't expected. Even the gruesome murder at the center of the Simpson saga is portrayed in a restrained, almost understated way.

"Yes!" he exclaims, all but falling out of his director's chair. "People think I'm just sort of this P.T. Barnum, razzle-dazzle guy. They think I go out of my way to be outlandish and theatrical at the expense of having emotions. They don't get that there's another side to me, and I keep trying to show that other side." Murphy pauses, and then he's back to probing: "So, is it going to be a hit?"

It's a peculiar thing to be asked by Murphy, 50, the closest thing the TV industry has to a proven hitmaker, save, perhaps, for Shonda Rhimes. Over the past decade and a half, he's made pop-culture juggernauts out of plastic surgeons on *Nip/Tuck*, high school misfits on *Glee* and witches, nuns and nymphomaniacs on *American Horror Story*. And in that time, he's become a name brand himself, more famous than all but the biggest stars in his sprawling casts. The showrunner, both pop savant and provocateur, has one of the richest eight-figure deals in television and a coterie of loyalists that includes Gwyneth Paltrow (with whom he's about to pitch a musical dramedy), Julia Roberts, Jessica Lange and now Lady Gaga. He's hosted President Obama at his home for a $40,000-a-couple fundraiser, and when he mentions his friends Norman, Barbra and David, he's referring to Lear, Streisand and Geffen.

At this point, says Fox TV Group chairman Dana Walden, adding Murphy's name to a show's early marketing efforts can boost awareness and intent-to-view numbers by as much as 20 percent. John Landgraf of FX watched as those figures on his *American Horror Story: Hotel* popped above megahit *Empire* with just a couple of weeks to air. "There's a limited number of creators in film or TV where if you put the title plus their name — if you say, 'Steven Spielberg's blah blah blah' or 'Marvel's blah blah blah' — you're going to get a different answer than if you don't," Landgraf says, "and Ryan is one of those guys."

Looking at Murphy's life today — at the peak of his profession, with a doting husband and two small children — it's easy to forget the tumultuous path he took to get here. For years, he was among the industry's prickliest figures. He'd famously resist nearly every note he was given, and a damning tweet or a few poor reviews could send him spiraling. "When I was starting out in Hollywood, everything was such a battle," he says, seated now in his three-story loft-style office on the Fox lot. "My impulse had always been to be a person who's uptight, who's all, 'I'll show them' and 'I got to change the world so that people like me don't go through this anymore,' and while I still feel a degree of that, it's different for me now. I feel like I grew up in such a big way in the past couple of years, in a way that I never thought I would." Then, a smile sets in: "You can't be the enfant terrible when you have the enfant at home."

Those closest to Murphy agree he's softened considerably since he settled down with his photographer husband, David Miller, a Kevin Bacon look-alike whom Murphy married in 2012, and welcomed sons Logan, 2, and Ford, 1. To Walden, who's become a confidante in their years of working together, the most meaningful change has been in his ability to bounce back when things don't go as well. "When you're in a role like he is, you have to rely on so many people, and it's inevitable that at some point along the way someone is going to drop the ball, someone's going to say something inflammatory, someone's not going to come through with what they promised they'd deliver, and that used to be almost debilitating to Ryan," she says. "I feel like being a parent, he's come to accept some margin of human failure, and the recovery time is much quicker now: He mourns it, he gets over it and he moves on."

None of that is to say his wounds have closed entirely or his skin suddenly has grown thick. And because of the boundary-pushing nature of so much of what Murphy puts on TV — gays, lesbians, threesomes, foursomes, clowns, midgets,

PREVIOUS SPREAD: GROOMING BY JHIZET PANOSIAN. BRITTON: VICTORIA WILL/INVISION/AP. PALTROW: RICHARD SHOTWELL/INVISION/AP. GAGA: JORDAN STRAUSS/INVISION/AP. LANGE: PAULSON: RICH FURY/INVISION/AP. MICHELE: PAULA A. HEBERT/INVISION/AP. ROBERTS: JIM SMEAL/BEIMAGES. BOMER: ERIC CHARBONNEAU/INVISION FOR WARNER BROS./AP IMAGES. *CRIME*: COURTESY OF FX. *QUEENS*: HILARY GAYLE/FOX. *HOTEL*: SUZANNE TENNER/FX.



Murphy's Actors

Connie Britton

American Horror Story **(season one),** ***American Crime Story***

Britton starred opposite Dylan McDermott on *AHS*' first season; now she's back in a markedly different role (Faye Resnick) on *ACS*. Says Murphy: "These actors keep working with me because I say to them, 'Let's not do that f—ing thing again. Let's do something batshit crazy that's the opposite of what we just did.' "

Gwyneth Paltrow

Glee, One Hit Wonders

Paltrow won an Emmy for her turn as substitute teacher Holly Holliday on *Glee*. Next, she and Murphy will shop their former movie idea, *One Hit Wonders*, to cable nets. The pitch: Paltrow stars as one of three women, each a one-hit wonder from the 1990s, who are brought together today to form a supergroup. Murphy promises original music for the hourlong dramedy.

Lady Gaga

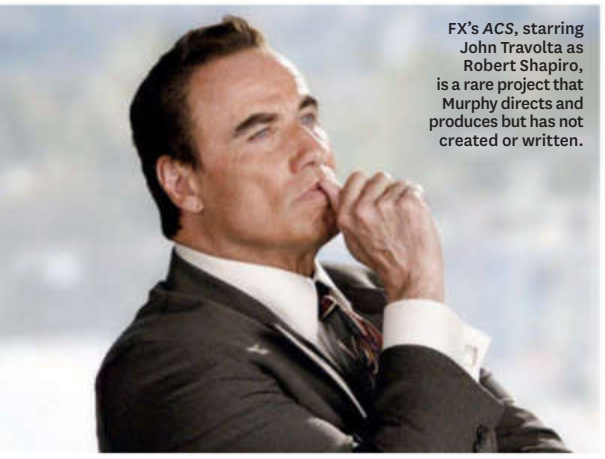
American Horror Story **(season five)**

It was Gaga who approached Murphy about a role on *AHS: Hotel*. She'd been a fan of the franchise, she says, and "it's kind of nice to be on the bottom sometimes and let someone else be in control." Since then, she's extended her stay and grown close with Murphy, whom she calls a "creative soul mate." He's already offered her a part on the series' next installment.

Jessica Lange

American Horror Story **(seasons one to four),** ***Long Day's Journey Into Night***

Lange thanked Murphy twice from the Emmy stage in 2014 for luring her to series TV, where she fronted the first four seasons of *AHS*. Come 2016, she'll move with him to Broadway, where she will star in a production of *Long Day's Journey Into Night* from the Roundabout Theatre Company in association with Murphy.



FX's *ACS*, starring John Travolta as Robert Shapiro, is a rare project that Murphy directs and produces but has not created or written.



Murphy describes Fox's *Scream Queens* as "bubble gum splashed with blood."



FX's *AHS* was rebooted with Lady Gaga, a fan of the franchise.

freaks, addicts and conjoined twins — he often is on the receiving end of backlash. "There's a lot of big bluster there, but he gets hurt," says Brad Falchuk, his longtime collaborator with whom he's co-created *Glee*, *Scream Queens* and *American Horror Story*. "People project onto him that he's not deeply sensitive, that he's above it all, but who *is* above it all?"

AS MUCH AS MURPHY ENJOYS FIRING OFF the questions, he's just as willing to answer them. In fact, nothing with him is off-limits, including the often distressing details of his childhood.

His earliest memories of growing up in suburban Indiana are of being woken up in the middle of the night by his father, a 6-foot-5 jock who worked in the newspaper business. "He'd make me sit at the kitchen table while he smoked with the timer on," says Murphy, "and he'd say the same thing over and over to me: 'I don't see myself in you, and I want you to tell me why that is.' " There's a chilliness in his voice as he continues. "What do you say to that when you're 6 years old?" He pauses. "I'd start off very emotional, and I would say: 'I don't know. I'm not athletic. I'm not built like you. I'm little, and I'm me, and I don't know what you mean.' But every year, I would get more and more belligerent, until it ended with: 'I don't want to be you. I don't want to live here.' "

> "People just think I'm sort of this P.T. Barnum, razzle-dazzle guy. They think I go **OUT OF MY WAY** to be outlandish and theatrical at the expense of having emotions. They don't get there's another side to me."

By 15, Murphy's secret was out. His mother had discovered a drawer full of love letters that her son, then away at summer camp, had saved from his 22-year-old boyfriend, Drew. "I'll never forget it," he says. "They called me home and sat me in front of my mother. She says to me: 'I know about Drew. I told him if he ever saw you again he'd be arrested for statutory rape. We just sold your car, you're grounded for the rest of the summer, and you start counseling tomorrow.' " That last bit, an explicit message that there was something about him that required fixing, hit him hardest.

But pretending he was anything other than what he was didn't suit Murphy, whose steely confidence made a powerful impression on people even then. His mother likes to say her son was ambitious at birth; he offers another theory: "The only way to get through the life I had was just to have a big head of steam and determination," he says. "I would walk down the hallway in high school and be called 'fag,' but I'd never let it stop me. I'd make a joke about it or I'd make it my goal to befriend those people, and then I'd end up sleeping with their boyfriends. ... I had a goal even then: I wanted to make it through high school alive, and along the way, I was like, 'Well, why can't I be popular? Why can't I go to the prom? Why can't I be the president of this or that club?' That was always important to me."

Still, Murphy wanted more from life than Indiana could offer. His mother and grandmother had fetishized movie stars and show business, and he'd long fantasized about a future in Hollywood. After graduating from Indiana University with a degree in journalism, he moved West, where he dated director Bill Condon (*Dreamgirls*) through much of his 20s. Murphy made a living as a reporter, writing pop-culture and lifestyle pieces for outlets including *Entertainment Weekly* and the *Los Angeles Times* while working on screenplays on the side. By the late 1990s, the rom-com *Why Can't I Be Audrey Hepburn?* earned him the attention of Spielberg, who bought the rights and nearly made the film.

Not long after, Murphy, then just 34, sold his first TV show: *Popular*, a satire set in the hierarchal world of high school. The experience at the now-shuttered WB proved an early lesson



Lea Michele
Glee*, *Scream Queens

Michele spent six seasons as Murphy's muse on the hit musical comedy *Glee*. As she was entering the final season, Murphy approached her about joining his next project, *Scream Queens*, as a scoliosis-plagued Kappa Kappa Tau pledge. She has said his pitch was simple: "Emma Roberts, Jamie Lee Curtis, neck brace." She was in.

Julia Roberts
Eat Pray Love*, *The Normal Heart

Since their first onscreen collaboration, *Eat Pray Love*, which Murphy co-wrote and directed, the pair has remained tight. More recently, he cast the A-lister — whom he has nicknamed "lady" — in his 2014 HBO film *The Normal Heart* as Dr. Emma Brookner, a polio survivor who treats several of the earliest victims of HIV and AIDS.

Matt Bomer
American Horror Story* (season five), *Glee*, *The New Normal*, *The Normal Heart

"Ryan is one of the only people from whom I'd blindly accept a job without knowing the premise or the character — and in TV, he's probably the only person," says Bomer, who won a Golden Globe for *The Normal Heart*. He guested on *Glee*, *The New Normal* and *AHS: Freak Show* before nabbing a starring role on *AHS: Hotel*.

Sarah Paulson
Nip/Tuck*, *Pretty/Handsome*, *American Horror Story* (all five seasons), *American Crime Story

"There's something about Ryan's confidence in his own choices that makes you feel confident about the ones you're making — by virtue of the fact that he asked you to do a part must mean you can," says Paulson, who is pulling double duty on *ACS* (as Marcia Clark) and her fifth season of *AHS*.

FOR AN EXCLUSIVE TOUR OF THE *AMERICAN HORROR STORY: HOTEL* SET WITH MURPHY, GO TO THR.COM OR THR.COM/IPAD.

in what Hollywood was — or rather, was not — ready for. "I had this one character who wore a fur coat, and I would get repeated notes, 'Can you take out the fur?' " he says. "It was code for, 'It's too gay.' " *Popular* was canceled after two seasons, and after a sitcom pilot he made didn't go, Murphy contemplated selling everything he had, moving to New York and starting over. Then he had the idea of setting a series in the world of cosmetic surgery.

"*NIP/TUCK*," HE SAYS, "WAS THE FIRST TIME in my career where I was just like, 'F— it, I'm going to write what I want to see.' "

The FX series — another satire, this one about society's obsession with cutting itself open — premiered to raves in 2003. "The drama's surgery scenes are as daring and graphic as its sex scenes," *New York Times* critic Alessandra Stanley wrote when it launched. "A buttocks implant, a breast augmentation and a facial reconstruction (carved to the tune of the Rolling Stones' "Paint It Black") are portrayed as unsparingly and cinematically as a mob hit on *The Sopranos*." *Nip/Tuck* would become the top-rated scripted series on basic cable, win a Golden Globe and establish Murphy as one of the most influential showrunners of his generation.

But often he was too busy fighting — with FX executives, with standards — to revel in the series' triumphs. "Back then, I wanted to do what I wanted to do," he says, "and if you wouldn't let me have my way, I'd be like, 'What do you mean?' " With time, *Nip/Tuck* would be faulted for flying off the rails, a criticism that would dog Murphy throughout his career. In a 2012 *New Yorker* essay subtitled "The Button-Pushing Camp of Ryan Murphy," Emily Nussbaum wrote: "He's been notorious for constructing fabulous pilots, then driving his inventions off a cliff. Characters get assassinated, literally and figuratively. Sly winks become grand mal seizures." Murphy didn't used to be able to stomach such critiques. "I'd take it so personally, like, 'Why doesn't everybody like it?' " he says. "I'm still the kid in high school who gets called 'fag' and wants that girl to be my friend."

If *Nip/Tuck* once orbited the zeitgeist, Murphy's next series, the Fox musical dramedy *Glee*, would become a full-blown cultural phenomenon. The series about a high school glee club of underdog outcasts launched in 2009, and by season two, it was the second-highest-rated scripted series on television, behind only *Modern Family*. At its peak, the series was drawing 13.5 million viewers. There were chart-topping albums, too, along with sold-out tours and a guest-star roster that read like a Hollywood phone book. But the billion-dollar franchise eventually would fall back down to earth, with troubles on camera and off. "I look at the *Empire* cast and everything that's going on with them, and I'm just like, 'Don't do it. Keep it together.' And I think they have in the way that we never did," says Murphy, who adds, "To this day, I'm devastated by everything that happened with that show."



"I still have really bad days where I can have a **VOLATILE PERSONALITY.** But when you see your 2-year-old throw a tantrum, you're suddenly like, '**HOLY SHIT, IS THAT WHAT I USED TO DO?**' "



Murphy, who has a rich deal at 20th Century Fox TV, moved his production company headquarters to the Fox lot earlier this year after spending years at Paramount.

Tom Ford shirt, Saint Laurent jacket, Tim Coppens pants, Tom Ford sneakers, Lanvin hat.



"Six months after we started dating, so many people came up to me and said, 'Oh my God, he's changed. He's just nicer, more relaxed,' " jokes Miller (right), Murphy's husband.

Over the course of six seasons of *Glee*, which petered out earlier this year, there was plenty written about backstage drama, fractured relationships and the death of star Cory Monteith from a drug overdose. All Murphy will offer are his own misgivings about his role on the show. "I was there with them all day long, and then we'd finish work and we'd go out and have fun all night, and I guess in a weird, twisted way, I was trying to relive the childhood I never had," he says. "I thought they wanted a parent, and they didn't. They didn't want me to tell them what to f—ing do. They didn't want me to tell them how to treat each other or what the world was like at the end of the day. I wish I could go back and do that differently with a lot of those actors. Some of them I'm still very close to: Lea Michele, Chord Overstreet, Darren Criss — but there were some that didn't work out well, and I regret that. I guess I just wish I had been able to let them figure it out for themselves."

American Horror Story marks the first time in Murphy's career that he's been able to enjoy his own success. The anthology format, which allows the restless showrunner to reimagine the story each season, has kept him and his troupe of actors from getting bored. He takes great pleasure not only in tailoring parts for his stars but also in presenting those parts in person. For Kathy Bates, it was a bearded lady on *AHS: Freak Show*; for Julia Roberts, a wheelchair-bound doctor in *The Normal Heart*, an HBO movie that Murphy directed. "It's fun for me to see their eyes go like corkscrews," he laughs. "It always starts with the same thing, 'You've got to be kidding.' And then I'll tell them, 'No, I really think you can do this because there's this thing about you that I know that I see that I want other people to see.' " Says Paulson, whose Murphy roles have included a lesbian, a drug dealer and a pair of conjoined twins: "When you dream about being an actress, I don't think you ever think you're going to have the opportunity to play a woman with two heads, but one of the reasons I love Ryan is that he thinks of things that I could never dream of."

To date, his *AHS* franchise has racked up 70 Emmy nominations and grown its audience every season it's been on. In early October, the fifth installment, for which Gaga replaced Lange as Murphy's muse, became the second-most-watched telecast in FX history. Murphy, who already has pitched Gaga on a potential role for season six ("She's working on an album, and she has a tour, so we're trying to figure that out," he says), claims not to remember describing himself as the "male Lady Gaga" in a 2012 interview. "Oh God, did I say that?" he howls, adding with a dismissive wrist flip, "I must have been drunk or joking." But when I press him on the remark, he suggests that he and Gaga share a "transformer" quality. "We do something, we're trying to work out something, our own shit in our own personal life," he says, "and then the next year we put on a different costume and we're somebody else."

Gaga — who reached out to him about the series, not the other way around — speaks about her connection with Murphy with the same cult-like zeal that others, including Paltrow and Roberts, have before her. "He's a creative soul mate for me," she says. "I've told him things I've never told anyone, and it's because he's part of something so intimate with me and something I don't experience with 99.9 percent of the people whom I come into contact with, who meet me and don't care to ask anything about me; they just want a photograph."

The majority of Murphy's writers and crew have remained fiercely loyal, too, even if living in his shadow can periodically prove challenging, as it seemingly did for Dante Di Loreto, who was pushed out earlier this year as head of Murphy's eponymous production company. Falchuk, one of several who has been with him since *Nip/Tuck*, suggests he's drawn not only to Murphy's vision but also to the clarity he brings to it. "Ryan's not afraid of being wrong," he says. "When we're working on a story or a script, and we hit on the thing that he thinks is the right way to go, we're going that way, we are not turning around, and that decisiveness is so important in TV because there's no time." Others cite Murphy's attention to detail, as invested in the visual elements as he is the script, or his fearlessness in presenting that which hasn't been seen. Ned Martel, a former journalist who works closely with Murphy as a writer on *AHS: Hotel*, likens him to another former boss, *Vogue* editor Anna Wintour. "They both project really high standards," he says. "Anna wouldn't freak out, but she'd be like, 'Lift it, I'm not seeing it,' and that's exactly what Ryan does."

MURPHY WAS THE FIRST CALL WALDEN AND her partner Gary Newman made when they secured the top job at Fox in summer 2014. They took him to lunch and all but begged for his next big idea. "The marketplace was already so competitive," says Walden, "and there was no one I could think of who's more capable of standing out in a crowd with their work than Ryan Murphy."

Together with *Glee* collaborators Falchuk and Ian Brennan, Murphy pitched *Scream Queens*, a "bubblegum splashed with blood" horror-comedy that could be rebooted each season. By October, Fox had ordered 15 episodes, straight-to-series, allowing Murphy time to assemble another all-star cast that includes Jamie Lee Curtis, Emma Roberts, Ariana Grande, Nick Jonas, Abigail Breslin, Keke Palmer and *Glee*'s Michele. It had all the trappings of a hit: a fresh idea, a soapy hook, a massive marketing campaign and the types of names that can draw an audience. As September drew closer, expectations soared. By premiere night, *Scream Queens* was a worldwide trending topic for seven hours, with plugs from Gaga, Gabourey Sidibe and Katy Perry. Murphy, with his nearly 750,000 Twitter followers, retweeted many of them.

But when Murphy woke up the following morning, the narrative had changed. The series

Lightning Round With Murphy



My role models

"Tom Ford (left) and Baz Luhrmann. They imitate no one."

Go-to cocktail

"Martini. Three olives. Straight up."



My living inspiration

Larry Kramer



Favorite Lady Gaga song

"Bad Romance" or "Applause"

Funniest nickname

"My grandmother called me:

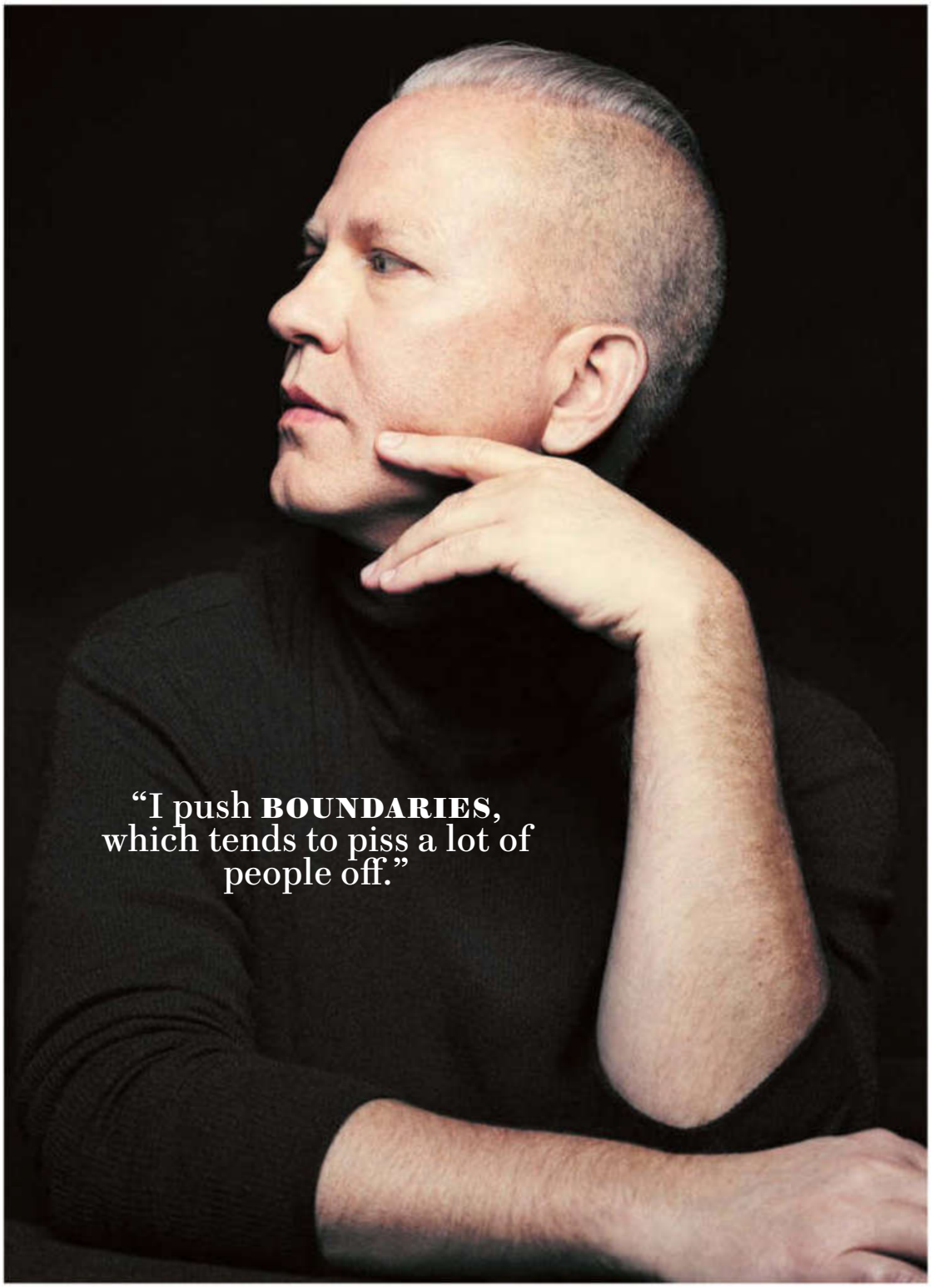
BOSSYPANTS!

had lured only 4 million viewers, and his feed was full of tweets about the show's "lackluster" performance. "I thought, 'OK, well, that's it,' " he says. "That and my career is over in some weird way." Fox TV COO Joe Earley gave him his first of several pep talks. "I think we got caught up in a part of our business that has changed," he told Murphy, a point Walden would reiterate when the series saw a dramatic lift online and on-demand. (One week in, that audience had more than doubled.) Soon, she and Newman, who were as eager to protect the ego of their prized showrunner as they were to preserve the reputation of their network, would put out a press release: "*Scream Queens* is a model for contemporary viewership."

Whether there's sufficient money in that model remains to be seen, but Murphy's spirits have lifted when I see him a few days later. He's already pitched Walden on a broader second season, which would feature a cast of all different age groups. (The current one will likely have four survivors, whom he says will play the same characters in a new venue.) "With all of my work, it always takes a while for people to get it," he says, reminding me — and perhaps himself — that neither *Horror Story* nor *Glee* was a hit right out of the gate. "It goes from, 'What the hell is that?' to 'Oh, I like that.' So hopefully, given the opportunity, the same thing will happen with *Scream Queens*."

If it doesn't, it won't be Murphy's first upset. *The New Normal*, which mirrored his and Miller's path to start a family through surrogacy, lasted only one season on NBC. "You've not felt the pain of rejection until a television show based on your own life is canceled," he says. "You're like, 'What? Am I canceled?' It was such a weird mindf— for me." And Murphy's hypersexual HBO drama *Open*, which he made just after *The Normal Heart*, never moved past the pilot stage. But arguably the biggest heartache came with his 2008 FX pilot *Pretty/Handsome*, which centered on a married gynecologist seeking a sex change. Joseph Fiennes starred alongside Blythe Danner, Robert Wagner and Carrie-Anne Moss. "I've never been more sure of anything in my life because I thought the story was so beautiful, just like I think [Amazon's] *Transparent* is beautiful," he says. "And then I get a call from John Landgraf: 'It's not going.' "

When I bring this up with Landgraf, he acknowledges it was the hardest call — "both the decision," he says, "and the phone call" — that he's ever had to make on the job. But, he felt, for the series to have worked creatively, it would have required more nudity than an advertiser-supported network like FX could have gotten away with at that time. "Like much of Ryan's work, the show was ahead of the curve — *Transparent*, a decade before *Transparent* existed."



I can't help but wonder whether Murphy has watched creator Jill Soloway capture the zeitgeist with that series in the way his projects often do and thought, "That should have been me." He insists he doesn't look at it that way. "I never could have told that story as well as Jill did because it was a much more personal story to her," he says. "That was not my story. I believed in it, but I didn't have a personal connection to it." A similar thing had happened with *Orange Is the New Black*, he says, revealing how he'd

CONTINUED ON PAGE 80



Last book I read

"Hillary Clinton's book. She gave it to me at a fundraiser, and I loved it."

Last thing I Googled

"Probably some weird deviant sexualized fetish that we're writing about on *American Horror Story*."



Star I'm dying to work with

Nicole Kidman





The music playing in my car

"Ryan Adams' version of *1989*. And I get very excited when the new Justin Bieber songs come on. I'm like a 14-year-old girl."

First time I was starstruck

"Meryl Streep. One of my first assignments when I first started off as a journalist was to go to the New York premiere of Mike Nichols' *Heartburn* and interview Meryl Streep."



The show I can't get enough of

HBO's *The Jinx*

MILLER: DAN STEINBERG/INVISION FOR THE TELEVISION ACADEMY/AP IMAGES. FORD: JOHN SALANGSANG/INVISION/AP. LUHRMANN: EVAN AGOSTINI/INVISION/AP. KRAMER: AP PHOTO/CHARLES SYKES. MARTIN): WHIP: ISTOCK. GAGA: CHRIS PIZZELLO/INVISION/AP. *CHOICES*: COURTESY OF SIMON&SCHUSTER. KIDMAN: RICHARD SHOTWELL/INVISION/AP. *JINX*: COURTESY OF HBO. ALBUM: COURTESY OF PAX-AM RECORD COMPANY.

Po

"This whole room is an inspiration board," says Noxon, who keeps a photo of late film critic Roger Ebert on her wall. "He reminds me to take every day and be grateful."

Marti Noxon

Girlfriends' Guide to Divorce (Bravo), *UnREAL* (Lifetime)

Photographed by **Amanda Friedman** on Sept. 30 at Noxon's home in Studio City (with her dog Marley)

WHEN I'M IN WRITING MODE, I BASICALLY hole up in my bedroom. So this room was purposefully designed for how I write, with the bed facing the window so I can look at something pretty. I do prefer to be on the bed. I can be on there for eight to 10 hours, and I'll only know because my back starts to hurt. For a long time, I would self-edit and make changes while I was writing. Now it flows kind of fast, and then, afterwards, I evaluate. I think that probably just comes with how many hours I've put in. At a certain point, it became more intuitive and less critical. — AS TOLD TO KATE STANHOPE

2015

WriterShowrunners

Edited by **Michael O'Connell** and **Stacey Wilson Hunt**

THR's annual rundown of TV's 50 most valuable writer-producers (and teams), whose worth only keeps rising in this golden age of content — tarnish and all. Plus, the suffering and inspiration behind five superscribes, photographed at work

One of the walls in Ridley's condo is decorated with random pages from the seven novels he has written in the various languages in which they've been published: Japanese, Italian, Russian and Spanish.

A mounted letter returned to Lee Harvey Oswald — just one piece in a display of unique criminal artifacts — is there to remind Ridley of his origins as a writer of hard-boiled crime novels.

John Ridley

American Crime (ABC)

Photographed by **Dustin Cohen** on Oct. 2 at Ridley's Central Park South home in New York City

I LIKE WRITING IN MY MANHATTAN apartment because it's in New York, which is so phenomenally more interesting than Los Angeles. I like the perspective. I like the view. It reminds me of the effort it took to arrive at this place in my career. Morning, specifically, is a great time to write. It's burden-free. But also at sunset, it's just so beautiful. And there's almost no bad spot to write in this apartment. It's just really inspiring. It's a space that I really tried to cultivate to fit my emotional and psychological desires as a writer. New York is a writer's city. When I'm here, I really feel like a writer. — AS TOLD TO JENNY SARGENT



"I have some strange Google searches. We write about a lot of apps and websites, so I register for everything. I registered on Ashley Madison and got busted, but I didn't fill out the profile or anything."

Sam Esmail

Mr. Robot (USA)

Photographed by **Emily Shur** on Oct. 2 at the Ace Hotel in Los Angeles

I HATE LOS ANGELES AND COULD NEVER GET inspired writing here, so it wound up just happening that every time I traveled, I would end up writing. Emmy [Rossum, my fiancee] and I would just travel on vacation, and then I would hang out in hotel rooms. It's my favorite thing to do, which pisses her off. When I'm at home, I end up having to run errands or take phone calls. I look for something that gets me going, gets me energetic, that inspires me, and, for whatever reason, being in a hotel room excites me. Also planes. And trains. I wrote a whole feature going up to San Francisco and back. That's a little ridiculous because it takes 13 hours each way — but there's something about transportation, leaving your environment and getting out of Los Angeles. — AS TOLD TO K.S.

"It's a difficult thing because you can't really listen to hip-hop while you write," says Agboh, who plays every other type of music while she writes but still includes tracks from EP and star 50 Cent's G-Unit on the show.

Courtney Kemp Agboh

Power (Starz)

Photographed by **Tommy Garcia** on Oct. 1 at Agboh's Sunset Gower Studios office

I CAN'T JUST GO AND WRITE. THERE ARE THOSE PEOPLE WHO stop what they're doing and go straight to the computer, but I'm not one of them. My brain is so loud. So I journal first. I pick up my personal notebook and get all those thoughts out of the way to clear the deck. Then I usually handwrite scenes before I type them because there's a real creative divide for me. I have to get that scene out of my body and have it physicalized before I can do the algebra of breaking it into dialogue. There is a notebook for every episode of the series where I've gone through scene by scene. It's the more emotional scenes where you have to get it out of you. And I have a 4-year-old, so I need to write in my office. I can't at home. It's like a cave in here. I light candles, Jo Malone Orange Blossom, so things smell good and the lighting is right. That sounds like I'm about to have sex. … There is a lot of sex in the show. — AS TOLD TO M.O.

"I burn Jo Malone Orange Blossom candles and I wear that scent, so basically everywhere I go smells like that," Agboh says. "I'm a little bit like Oprah in that way. It's my favorite thing."



TV'S MUCH-discussed proliferation of scripted series — and the widely held belief that a saturation point is looming — have given revered showrunners even more leverage in the business. Why? Even in TV's ballyhooed "golden age," there isn't enough talent to go around. The lack of skilled writer-producers, lamented in executive suites and on the terrace at Soho House, has trickled down to the writers room. When *The Hollywood Reporter* asked its 2015 Power Showrunners to describe a challenge that wasn't an issue five years ago, responses overwhelmingly focused on the dearth of available staffers. "Everyone good is working on a show for eight episodes," says Mindy Kaling, creator and star of *The Mindy Project*. "Then, when they're free, we're already staffed up." Her sentiment is echoed by the old guard. Carlton Cuse, a pro of more than 20 years who has three dramas (*Bates Motel*, *The Strain*, *Colony*) on his roster, says the race to hire the best writers has reached new heights. "There are 400 shows that all want to hire the same people," he says.

If there is a tipping point, we're not quite there. The volume of original scripted series is up 40 percent from where it was in 2010. It makes the already subjective job of calculating which showrunners wield the most influence even more complicated. This is why *THR* editors recast the methodology for this year's list of Power Showrunners, who were chosen based on their value to network (or streamer) identity, ratings clout, volume of series on the air and critical favor. Does TV newbie *Mr. Robot* creator Sam Esmail have the same clout as uber-producer Greg Berlanti? Of course not — unless you work at USA. That's one reason why you'll see them both — and 19 other names who never have graced this list — in the 2015 class.



MGM made *Fargo*-themed snow globes based on one that EP Warren Littlefield had kept in his office since 1997, when he, then at NBC, first attempted a TV adaptation of the Coen brothers film.

Noah Hawley
Fargo (FX)

Photographed by **Emily Berl** on Oct. 1 at Hawley's office in Santa Monica

I STARTED OUT AS A NOVELIST. BUT A NOVEL IS LIKE A country road, and Hollywood is like the freeway, so I've trained myself over the years to write anywhere, anytime. When you're running a show, you have this crazy schedule, and if your assistant tells you, "You can rewrite this script between 4 a.m. and 6 a.m.," that's when you do it. You can't sit around and wait for the muse to come. If I'm feeling dry, I find something interesting — an episode of [the podcast] *Radiolab* or an article in *The New Yorker*. It's not like you're going to steal ideas from them; you just need to think thematically about the ideas that have to connect story together. Sometimes you just need to read a book. — AS TOLD TO BRYN ELISE SANDBERG

"I try to stay on my feet as much as possible when I write," says Hawley, who had a standing desk with a vintage classroom feel custom-made by Mockingbird Domestics, a furniture shop in Austin.



The Network Ambassadors

With every platform clamoring for its own scripted identity, these are the producers behind the series that have become their outlets' creative calling cards

Courtney Kemp Agboh
Power (Starz)

Star and exec producer Curtis "50 Cent" Jackson may be the face of *Power*, but creator-showrunner Kemp Agboh, 38, is the show's pulse. The former staff favorite at *The Good Wife* has made the drama the most watched in Starz's history (6.5 million multiplatform viewers for season two) and inspired the network's play for black audiences, long before Fox did with *Empire*.

Biggest job challenge I didn't have five years ago "The extracurricular of appearances and social media. The whole point of being a writer is to be alone in a room, wearing sweatpants, drowning in your own morbid thoughts."

Last binge-watch "*Archer*. It's my favorite thing in the entire world, other than my daughter."

Mara Brock Akil and Salim Akil
Being Mary Jane (BET)

Having made the erstwhile music network a scripted destination with the now-concluded *The Game* and its enduring No. 1 hit *Mary Jane*, the power couple is in high demand. In 2015, Mara, 45, and Salim, 51, signed a rich multiyear deal with Warner Bros. TV that will see them developing projects for the studio in 2016.

Biggest job challenge I didn't have five years ago
Salim "Finding an assistant who wants to be an assistant and not on reality TV."

First spec Mara "It entailed really bad writing."

Last binge-watch Amiel "*The West Wing*. I watched every episode during its run. Now my 13-year-old son is hooked."

Byron Balasco
Kingdom (DirecTV)

The satellite-based service was one of the first alternative platforms to break into original programming (see its acquisitions of NBC's *Friday Night Lights* and FX's *Damages*). Now the MMA drama from Balasco, 38, has given DirecTV critical cred of its own. Insiders say another renewal is a lock.

Current showrunner role model "Vince Gilligan. I've never met him, but I admire his writing, filmmaking, showrunning and what I've heard about his human decency."

Biggest job challenge I didn't have five years ago "Grabbing attention — without degrading yourself — by simply screaming, 'Hey, America! Free boobs and violence! Wednesdays at 9/8 Central.' "

Sam Esmail
Mr. Robot (USA)

Entrusted with the blue-sky-free rebranding of basic cable's longtime scripted hub, Esmail, 38, was given full showrunner responsibilities on his hacker drama despite having no TV experience. After a pre-emptive renewal, the show averaged 3 million viewers and ranked as summer 2015's rare critical darling.

Silliest network fight "The sound of peeing."

Strangest writing ritual "Arguing with myself, out loud."

Jack Amiel, Michael Begler, Greg Jacobs and Steven Soderbergh
The Knick (Cinemax)

Their four-way collaboration on the dark 1900 hospital drama has been a boon to HBO's sibling network and helped to shed its "Skinemax" moniker of yesteryear (read: multiple Emmy noms and near-universal critical acclaim). *The Knick* also is reimagining how TV is made with Soderbergh helming all 10 episodes at once.

Biggest job challenge I didn't have five years ago
Begler "Keeping your plotlines a secret. A photo by a background actor can be around the world within seconds."

Stephen Falk
You're the Worst (FXX)

When Falk's anti-romantic comedy bounced from FX to network sibling FXX, it lost neither its critical cachet nor its devoted (if modest) audience. FX Productions is only deepening its relationship with the scribe-producer, 43, who started out writing *Weeds* and *Orange Is the New Black*. He's developing two more projects for the cable powerhouse.

Current showrunner role model "Jenji Kohan, at whose colorfully nail-polished feet I learned."

Biggest job challenge I didn't have five years ago "Snapchat recaps? Is that a thing?"

Marti Noxon
Girlfriends' Guide to Divorce (Bravo), *UnREAL* (Lifetime)

With a résumé that boasts *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, *Mad Men* and *Glee*, to name a few, Noxon, 51, is one of TV's most formidable pitch women. The dramedy *Girlfriends' Guide to Divorce* and reality TV-skewering *UnREAL* are their networks' current internal (and fan) favorites.
Current showrunner role model "Shonda Rhimes for her mastery of broadcast TV."
Silliest network fight "On *Buffy*, we did one of the first lesbian kisses on network TV. [The WB] said we could show them do it once, but if they did it twice, that meant they liked it. We fought that. And lost."

Mindy Kaling and Matt Warburton
The Mindy Project (Hulu)

After its failed attempts at cementing a scripted identity, Hulu's saving grace arrived with the acquisition of Fox's Kaling-created-and-starring comedy about a New York OB-GYN. Hulu was so hot on Kaling, 36, that it lined up the deal to save the series well before its broadcast exit.
Silliest network fight Kaling "I was once bullied into offering a guest part to someone I didn't even want to hire. I had to call, pitch it to them, and then they turned me down. I will never do that again."
Strangest writing ritual Warburton "I use the bathroom in the building next door to force myself to get sunlight."

Michelle and Robert King
The Good Wife (CBS)

The couple behind broadcast's hottest prestige drama, now in its seventh season, makes up a wildly valuable part of the CBS family, thanks in part to the series' ranking as the Big Four's most affluent-skewing show. The network is betting big on the next project from Michelle, 53, and Robert, 55: Beltway horror drama *BrainDead* nabbed a straight-to-series pickup for 2016.
Biggest job challenge I didn't have five years ago Michelle "Finding actors eager to commit to 22 episodes a year."
Silliest network fight



Michelle "It involved using the word 'piss.' Who knew you couldn't say 'piss'?!"

Jill Soloway
Transparent (Amazon)

Fifty-year-old Soloway's passion project based on her own transgender parent has become a civil rights vehicle, an Emmy darling (see her win for directing and star Jeffrey Tambor's prize for lead actor, among others) and Amazon's calling card in courting A-list talent.
Go-to writers room takeout "I've installed a very convenient pellet and water dispenser in our writers cage — I mean room."
Silliest network fight "What's a network again?"

Jennie Snyder Urman
Jane the Virgin (The CW)

Since its 2006 launch, The CW had little more than fanboys for feathers in its cap. Enter *Jane the Virgin*, the Venezuelan telenovela adapted for U.S. audiences by *Gilmore Girls* alum Urman, 40. Though modestly rated, the show scored a coup with its Golden Globe win for breakout star Gina Rodriguez — one that has ingratiated the showrunner to the now emboldened No. 5 net.
Last binge-watch *Orange Is the New Black*
Strangest writing ritual "I proofread and revise while I'm walking around in my sweatpants, hood up. I'm sure I'm known as the neighborhood weirdo."

Beau Willimon
House of Cards (Netflix)

As Netflix sees its catalog of original series multiply like binge-able bacteria in a petri dish, it is the streamer's first foray that remains its flagship. The dark political drama from Willimon, 37, which debuts its fourth season in 2016, is Netflix's biggest Emmy bait and virtual-watercooler fodder.
Strangest writing ritual "[Doing it] on less than four hours of sleep."

The Ratings Magnets

Theirs are the biggest shows on TV, attracting huge audiences and paying the bills at their networks and studios — making them quite popular in the process

Kenya Barris and Jonathan Groff
Black-ish (ABC)

The show has proved to be a solid partner to ABC's longtime sitcom flagship *Modern Family* after leading the broadcast diversity wave with creator Barris, 41, and veteran comedy writer Groff, 53, at the lead. Advertisers took notice. After wrapping last season with an average 3.3 rating in the key demo, *Black-ish* saw the biggest rate increase of any comedy for 2015-16 — jumping a reported 20 percent.
Silliest network fight Groff "They're all silly, really, but the making up is sooo hot."
Strangest writing ritual Barris "Buying a new laptop for every new show I'm on. It gives me a fresh start."

Ilene Chaiken, Lee Daniels and Danny Strong
Empire (Fox)

What more can be said about the biggest show on broadcast? Fox's savior series, which averaged more than 17 million viewers and a stunning 7.1 rating among adults 18-to-49 in its first season, is on track to grow even more this season. Much credit goes to Chaiken, 58, who serves as the showrunner, while Daniels, 55, directs, and Emmy winner Strong, 41, is a permanent fixture in the diverse writers room.
Strangest writing ritual Chaiken "I cook something ambitious every time I start on a new script. I start early in the morning and intersperse the writing with cooking."
Last binge-watch Chaiken *Battlestar Galactica*

John Eisendrath and Jon Bokenkamp
The Blacklist (NBC)

It's not the ratings powerhouse it once was, but the James Spader drama from Bokenkamp, 42, and Eisendrath, 56, remains NBC's scripted favorite. After nabbing the post-Super Bowl slot in 2015, it migrated from Mondays to Thursdays, where it has helped start the revival of the network's long-troubled "Must See" night. And that's before it adds another 72 percent of its audience in DVR.
Biggest job challenge I didn't have five years ago Bokenkamp "Coming to work dressed. I'd never collaborated with other writers before this job."
Silliest network fight Eisendrath "I never fight with the network. I love the network. The network is amazing."

Alex Gansa
Homeland (Showtime)

Still averaging nearly 6.2 million weekly viewers in season five, the Gansa-led Showtime favorite has adopted the structure of his former gig (*24*) by rebooting each season, with Claire Danes' CIA wunderkind tackling even heavier issues of homeland security and terrorists in new parts of the globe (this season, Berlin). Gansa, 54, even made a rare Emmy comeback this year with an outstanding drama series nomination.
Current showrunner role model "Anyone who runs more than one show. I run one, and it nearly kills me."
Last binge-watch *Peaky Blinders*

Scott M. Gimple and David Erickson
The Walking Dead, Fear the Walking Dead (AMC)

Leave it to TV's highest-rated series to outdo its own freshman run with an even bigger spinoff. The prequel companion, *Fear the Walking Dead*, with Erickson at the lead, now ranks as the biggest premiere in cable history: 13.3 million viewers watched in the first round of live-plus-3-day ratings. With the original as big as ever (15.5 million viewers last season), Gimple and Erickson, both 44, rule AMC.
Last binge-watch Gimple "Christmas hiatus will be a blur of *BoJack Horseman*, *Sense8*, *Game of Thrones* and *Rick and Morty*."
Go-to writers room takeout Erickson "Whatever offers the most roughage."

Gary Glasberg
NCIS, NCIS: New Orleans (CBS)

Empire might be TV's crown jewel, but the original *NCIS* remains broadcast's most watched drama — averaging more than 21 million viewers last season in the U.S. alone. Shepherding another successful spinoff in *NCIS: New Orleans*, Glasberg, 49, is the biggest player in CBS' most formidable franchise, which still occupies three hours of programming every week.
First spec "An episode of *Northern Exposure*."
Strangest writing ritual "I have to get dressed and put my shoes on before I sit at my computer."

Adam F. Goldberg
The Goldbergs (ABC)

Branching out after three seasons with his 1980s-set autobiographical sitcom — he recently partnered with Oscar winner Patrick Osborne (*Wreck-It Ralph*) for an ambitious live-action/CGI comedy pilot — Goldberg, 39, is a vital part of ABC's post-*Modern Family* plan. *The Goldbergs* has thrived since its Wednesday move, averaging a 3.1 rating in the key demo last season, making it a keystone in one of few flourishing comedy blocks.
Silliest network fight "Over the amount of 'shadowing' we can show on Jeff Garlin's balls when he wears tighty-whities."
Last binge-watch *Wet Hot American Summer*

Marlene King and Oliver Goldstick
Pretty Little Liars (ABC Family)

When ABC Family rebrands as Freeform in 2016, the tween-obsessed cable network will do so on the back of its longest-running and highest-rated hit's January return. King, 48, and Goldstick, 54, have kept the drama on top for 130 episodes now, outlasting a slew of hopeful network companions. The recent summer finale hit two-year highs among adults 18-to-34 and 18-to-49 and averaged a whopping 3.1 million night-of viewers.

FIRST SPREAD, NOXON HAIR BY JOSEPH CHASE FOR ORIBE HAIR CARE AND MAKEUP BY AGOSTINA FOR NARS COSMETICS AT EXCLUSIVE ARTISTS MANAGEMENT. RIDLEY GROOMING BY SUSAN DONOGHUE AT ENNIS INC. SECOND SPREAD, ESMAIL GROOMING BY CHRISTINE NELLI FOR TATCHA SKINCARE AND KEVIN MURPHY HAIR CARE AT EXCLUSIVE ARTISTS MANAGEMENT. KEMP AGBOH HAIR BY STEVEN MASON FOR RENE FURTERER AND MAKEUP BY AUTUMN MOULTRIE FOR NARS COSMETICS AT EXCLUSIVE ARTISTS MANAGEMENT. *PROJECT*: BETH DUBBER/NBC.

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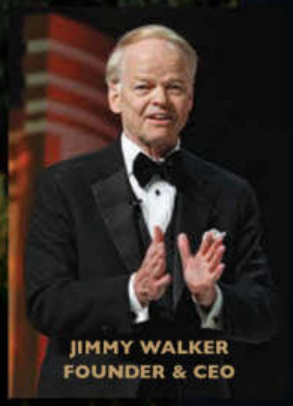
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My Least Glamorous Job in Hollywood Was . . .

"Playing an extra in a pilot called *I Gave at the Office*, in which [my character] was molested in an elevator."
Christopher Lloyd, *Modern Family*

"As a production assistant: having to walk the producer's dog; having to get coffee for the crew at 2 a.m. in a pre-Starbucks world; having to hose blood off the sidewalk in front of the Park Plaza Hotel before shooting."
Jenji Kohan, *Orange Is the New Black*

"Directing. Not joking. It's utterly exhausting."
Jay and Mark Duplass, *Togetherness*

"Driving my 1979 Chevrolet Impala all over L.A. delivering scripts for a movie-of-the-week production company. But I met Jennie Garth."
Damon Lindelof, *The Leftovers*

"This morning I picked up a dead cockroach from my office floor, and it turned out to be very much alive. Not too glamorous."
Carlton Cuse, *The Strain*, *Bates Motel*

"I was a fluffer for Dom DeLuise."
Kurt Sutter, *The Bastard Executioner*



Jay (left) and Mark Duplass

Kohan

Silliest network fight Goldstick "Trying to explain to an exec why wool-clad, ship-bound, lice-infested Pilgrims may not look 'sexy' when they're wet."
Last binge-watch
King *The Strain*

Aaron Korsh
Suits (USA)

USA may be in the midst of a love affair with *Mr. Robot*, but *Suits* still anchors its sprawling scripted roster. Korsh, 48, has kept the legal drama as the channel's most watched original for five seasons running, and network brass now are looking to him to help bridge the gap between its procedural past and (hopefully) a prestige future. His period drama *Paradise Pictures*, about 1940s Hollywood, is considered likely for a series order.
Current showrunner role model "David Benioff and D.B. Weiss. I know nothing about them, but in my opinion, *Game of Thrones* is the best show on television right now.
Last binge-watch *Fargo*

Steve Levitan and Christopher Lloyd
Modern Family (ABC)

Like all good things, *Modern Family*'s record five-year winning streak for outstanding comedy series at the Emmys came to an end in 2015 — but the comedy remains one of the biggest players at its network and beyond. Levitan, 53, and Lloyd, 55, kicked off the seventh season with a formidable 4.9 rating in the key demo and 13.1 million viewers, ensuring another season as broadcast's No. 2 comedy behind *The Big Bang Theory*.
Biggest job challenge I didn't have five years ago
Lloyd "Getting people on our show not to be influenced by what they read on the child-controlled Internet."
Go-to writers room takeout
Lloyd "Wally's Wine and Spirits."

Erica Messer
Criminal Minds (CBS)

Criminal Minds might be CBS' most unsung hero. With no fanfare, the series ended last year as the network's top-rated and youngest-skewing drama, with an average 3.6 rating among adults in its 10th season. Messer, 41, has helped keep the series successful amid multiple cast changes. (Paget Brewster, Jennifer Love Hewitt, Mandy Patinkin and Jeanne Tripplehorn are among the big names who have come and gone.) Now CBS is



Outlander

entrusting Messer with a second stab at a spinoff: midseason's *Beyond Borders*.
Current showrunner role model "Remains Chris Keyser and Amy Lippman."
Strangest writing ritual "Getting all of the laundry done before I can write."

Steve Molaro
The Big Bang Theory (CBS)

Eight seasons in, *The Big Bang Theory* remains a rare juggernaut comedy. Under the supervision of Molaro, 48, CBS has been able to move *BBT* around and use it to launch new shows like *Scorpion* and *Life in Pieces* on Mondays, while *Thursday Night Football* fills its usual slot at the beginning of the past two seasons. It is broadcast's most watched show (21.2 million viewers), and, until *Empire* showed up, it also was the top-rated (6.5 rating among adults 18-to-49).
First spec "Writing sample sketches for the Nickelodeon kid sketch show *All That*."
Strangest writing ritual "Hanging on to pencils that I think have good jokes in them."

Ronald D. Moore
Outlander (Starz)

When Moore, 51, introduced his adaptation of Diana Gabaldon's *Outlander* book series to Starz in 2014, he gave CEO Chris Albrecht what he'd been craving since the network moved into originals: buzz. The period romance courted fan fervor well in advance of its launch and since has given the pay cabler some of its best ratings to date.
Silliest network fight "Over whether or not there should be basketball games and birthday parties on the Battlestar Galactica."
Current showrunner role model
Jason Katims

Peter Nowalk
How to Get Away With Murder (ABC)

It is not easy standing out when your mentor is Shonda Rhimes. But that's exactly what Nowalk, 37, has done with *How to Get Away With Murder*. His series won star Viola Davis a historic Emmy for lead drama actress and, in its second season, still is thriving as broadcast's No. 4 drama; its recent premiere logged a 4.1 rating in the key demo.
Silliest network fight "It was over the implication of the word 'inside.' "
Go-to writers room takeout "It's about to be Sugarfish now that one opened up across the street."

D.B. Weiss and David Benioff
Game of Thrones (HBO)

Their HBO flagship continues to set its own ratings records on fire, climbing to past 8 million night-of viewers and more than 20 million a week. The fifth season of the fantasy series run by Weiss, 44, and Benioff, 45, also was something of a coronation when it emerged as Emmy's winningest drama of 2015 with a surprise win for outstanding drama series, edging out the final, nostalgia-filled season of AMC's *Mad Men*.
Last binge-watch
Weiss *Rick and Morty*
Benioff *Mr. Robot*
Go-to writers room takeout
Weiss "It doesn't get better than Mel's Fish Shack."

DUPLASS: ARTHUR MOLA/INVISION/AP. KOHAN: RICH FURY/INVISION/AP. *OUTLANDER*: NEIL DAVIDSON/STARZ.

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Greg Berlanti

Arrow, The Flash, Mysteries of Laura, Blindspot, Supergirl (The CW, NBC, CBS)

No longer a showrunner in the strictest sense of the word, Berlanti, 43, has amassed a TV catalog unrivaled by even the biggest guns — a formidable six series on the air boast his executive producer credit this season alone. Those include The CW's golden pairing of *Arrow* and *The Flash*, CBS' big new swing *Supergirl* and, the latest feather in his cap, NBC's breakout drama *Blindspot*.

Current showrunner role model "All of the folks I work with. I admire them very much."

Last binge-watch "*The Carmichael Show* [on NBC]. It is a work of genius."

Carlton Cuse

Bates Motel, The Strain (A&E, FX)

Since *Lost*, the writer-producer has been incredibly prolific, executive producing A&E's mainstay *Bates Motel* while running day-to-day on the FX vampire drama *The Strain*, producing USA's upcoming *Colony* and most recently boarding the very hot *Jack Ryan* spinoff drama on Amazon. TV's take on Tom Clancy's popular CIA character will find Cuse, 56, heading back to his roots as a classic showrunner.

Current showrunner role model "I wish I could write dialogue as magnificently as [departed *Veep* showrunner] Armando Iannucci."

Silliest network fight "Going frame by frame, in the editing room, with someone from standards and practices to determine how many frames of [actress] Evangeline Lilly's lower boob we could show in a scene where her shirt comes off on *Lost*."

Howard Gordon

Homeland, Tyrant, Legends, Lookinglass (Showtime, FX, TNT, Fox)

The portfolio of Gordon, 54, remains formidable. On top of showrunning the ever-complicated *Tyrant* — recently renewed for a third season — he has the now-being-rebooted TNT drama *Legend*, Fox's midseason Frankenstein entry *Lookinglass* and still boasts an EP cred on Showtime's *Homeland*. Speaking of franchises, a revival of his past hit *24* still is on the table at Fox after 2014's successful limited run.

Last binge-watch *Empire*

Strangest writing ritual "The pretexts for procrastination I invent during early-morning migrations to my laptop. If I was 25 percent as good a writer as I am a procrastinator, I'd have won the MacArthur genius grant by now."

Bill Lawrence

Undateable (NBC)

Lawrence's latest challenge is to try and revive a seldom-attempted genre: the live sitcom. NBC is hoping to "eventize" the third season of his stand-up-centric *Undateable* with live Friday telecasts this fall. And if that doesn't work, Lawrence, 46, also has CBS' most anticipated midseason entry: a TV take on the popular *Rush Hour* film franchise.

Last binge-watch "*Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt*. I'm annoyed by how funny it is, but I've really enjoyed watching it with my daughter."

Go-to writers room takeout "Our room gets very excited on grocery day when there are cold cuts. The only problem is I always ask for hard salami, but somebody is secretly devouring pounds of hard salami before I get to have any. I will find out who it is, and I will destroy them. I hope I get to see this in print."

Chuck Lorre

The Big Bang Theory, Mom, Mike & Molly (CBS)

The curtain might have closed on *Two and a Half Men*, but Lorre, 62, is no less busy with three CBS sitcoms still in production. *The Big Bang Theory*'s power unchallenged (see Steve Molaro), and *Mike & Molly* continuing to be steady schedule-filler for the network, his day-to-day focus remains on the critically beloved *Mom*. The latter recently nabbed Allison Janney a record seventh Emmy.

Editor's note When asked to answer questions, Lorre jokingly offers only this: "You can't honestly think I have time to fill out this questionnaire."

Ryan Murphy and Brad Falchuk

American Horror Story, Scream Queens (FX, Fox)

See the cover story (page 48) for the full breadth of Murphy and Falchuk's work, but this year sees them add two shows to their roster: Fox's *Scream Queens* (with *Glee* partner Ian Brennan) and, in February 2016, FX's *American Crime Story*.

Current showrunner role model Falchuk Mike Schur

Silliest network fight Falchuk "Brad, does every character have to end up being gay?"

Tyler Perry

If Loving You Is Wrong, The Haves and the Have Nots, For Better or Worse (OWN)

The only person more important to OWN is Oprah herself. Perry, 46, has seen his trifecta drive the cable network's ratings to new highs. Thanks to *The Haves and the Have Nots* and *If Loving You Is Wrong*, the third quarter of 2015 ranks as OWN's most watched and highest-rated. Perry recently bought a shuttered Atlanta Army base to house his growing studio.

Strangest writing ritual "I don't have any — unless you call locking myself in my basement in the Bahamas and not coming out until I have a script a ritual."

Last binge-watch "I watched [all of] *House of Cards* in four days. I started hearing Frank Underwood in my sleep."

Julie Plec

The Vampire Diaries, The Originals (The CW)

If Greg Berlanti is The CW's yin, Plec, 43, undoubtedly is its yang. Her vampire dramas own the network's Thursday block.

To Tweet or Not to Tweet? 6 Scribes Weigh In

SURE THING

"I am embarrassed to admit that Twitter is where I get all my news, gossip and mood updates of my co-workers and friends."
Julie Plec, *The Vampire Diaries* and *The Originals*

"It's good to know what my audience immediately thinks, and Twitter is definitely immediate."
Tyler Perry, *If Loving You Is Wrong*, *The Haves and the Have Nots* and *For Better or Worse*

"Fox gently nudged me into tweeting about the show. As a person with OCD tendencies, it's not been the best thing for my sanity."
Will Forte, *The Last Man on Earth*

NOT SO MUCH

"All social media is tricky for me because people think I'm Jonathan Groff the actor. I know this is disappointing to half of my Facebook friends."
Jonathan Groff, *Black-ish*

"I'd [rather] just 'follow' everyone, and that's just not possible."
Erica Messer, *Criminal Minds*

"I'd rather be on Instagram. Then I can save my jokes for the script."
Matt Warburton, *The Mindy Project*



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The Vampire Diaries remains one of the net's top-rated shows, with an average 1.3 rating in the key adults demo, and mid-season she will add a third show, *Containment*, giving her 30 percent of the network's primetime slate.
Current showrunner role model "I'm convinced: No one cares or feels more deeply than [*The Leftovers*'] Damon Lindelof."
Last binge-watch *Mr. Robot*

Shonda Rhimes and Betsy Beers
Scandal, Grey's Anatomy, How to Get Away With Murder (ABC)

Empire-builder Rhimes, 45, still serves as the showrunner of top ABC drama *Scandal* and is the face of the growing Shondaland shingle, and with it, ABC. The creator has been credited with reviving the network's drama identity. Beers, 57, runs lead in developing their production house's mounting roster. A fourth series, *The Catch*, enters ABC's Shonda-verse at midseason.
Biggest job challenge I didn't have five years ago Beers "It is virtually impossible to read and watch everything that is out there."
Last binge-watch Beers *You're the Worst*

Dick Wolf
Chicago Fire, Chicago P.D., Chicago Med, Law & Order: SVU (NBC)

No one occupies more real estate on one network this year than the 68-year-old executive producer, whose NBC roster includes three Chicago-set procedurals and the most successful spinoff to his original *Law & Order* franchise — *Special Victims Unit*. *Law & Order* also gets the reality treatment in 2016 with *You the Jury*.
Biggest job challenge I didn't have five years ago "Keep up with [my] other shows so we're not repeating ideas. With the number of series practically doubled, that is now virtually impossible."
Last binge-watch *Naked and Afraid*

The Pop Icons
Their cultural footprint extends far beyond Hollywood, with critical and awards cachet that allows them to court A-list talent and envy among their competitors

Robert Carlock and Tina Fey
Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt (Netflix)

The *30 Rock* duo, 43 and 45, skirted an abbreviated life on broadcast when Universal Television placed *Kimmy Schmidt* at Netflix, where it became a pop-culture phenom and boasted more Emmy noms — eight — than the streamer's favored darling *Orange Is the New Black*.
Current showrunner role model Carlock "Whoever has a hiatus week right now. I'd like to be like that person."
Silliest network fight Carlock "There's a fake dirty word that Tina invented at *SNL*, which we were not allowed to use on *30 Rock* because someone had made up a fake definition and put it on Urban Dictionary."

Lena Dunham, Jenni Konner and Judd Apatow
Girls (HBO)

Girls remains a cultural heavyweight for HBO — extending its footprint well beyond the mere 10 episodes that air each winter. Just look at Dunham's (29) and Konner's (44) expanding reach outside of the show with the buzzed-about launch of their newsletter *Lenny* and the enduring reign of Apatow, 47, in directing hit comedy features like *Trainwreck*.
First spec Dunham "I've never written one, but I did threaten to do an episode of *How I Met Your Mother* a few times."
Last binge-watch Konner "*Difficult People*. Lena turned me on to it. I'm obsessed."

Mark and Jay Duplass
Togetherness (HBO)

Migrating from film in a very big way, brothers Mark, 38, and Jay, 42, scored a speedy renewal for their introspective HBO comedy about L.A. adulthood and a two-year deal to develop new series at the network. This is on top of a similar pact, on the movie side, with Netflix as well as the duo's respective acting obligations on *The League* and *Transparent*.
First spec script "An ex-porn addict goes undercover into the seedy world of *Girls Gone Wild* after the website creators beat him up on his vacation. We wrote it for Paul Giamatti to star. It was called *Boobs in the Night*. It did not sell."

Will Forte
The Last Man on Earth (Fox)

Taking TV's fondness for multihyphenates to new heights, *Saturday Night Live* alum Forte, 45, is lead writer on his comedic creation, (taking a mini writers room with him even when he travels for promotions) and occupies more proportional screen time than any other broadcast network star.
Strangest writing ritual "My bladder has to be completely empty."
Go-to writers room takeout "The California Chicken Cafe in Chatsworth. A heartfelt thank you to all the chickens who have given their lives just because you are the closest chicken place to our office."

Peter Gould and Vince Gilligan
Better Call Saul (AMC)

Breaking Bad was a daunting act to follow, but Gould, 55, and Gilligan, 48, did not slack with their AMC spinoff. *Saul* premiered in February to a then-cable record (6.9 million viewers and a 3.4 rating among adults 18-to-49) before nabbing seven Emmy nominations. With its parent series and *Mad Men* out of the picture, it heads into its second season as the network's prestige flagship series.
Last binge-watch Gould "*Silicon Valley*. Brilliant satire and so much more."
Go-to writers room takeout Gilligan "I love a bar in our neighborhood called Sardo's. Technically it's not takeout, as they refuse to deliver their liquor to our writers room. However, they have live Dixieland jazz on Tuesday afternoon, then porn-star karaoke. Yay, Tuesday!"

Noah Hawley
Fargo (FX)

The verdict is still out on whether Hawley can maintain the critical fervor (18 Emmy nominations and a win for miniseries) for his reimagining of the Coen brothers' classic 1996 feature in its second season, but early reviews bode well for the 48-year-old former novelist. Hey, he can't possibly flub his follow-up the way most believe HBO and Nic Pizzolatto did with *True Detective*, *Fargo*'s constant point of comparison.
Biggest job challenge I didn't have five years ago "Yes, there's much more competition, and audiences have scattered, but the only way networks can distinguish themselves is to make shows that are cinematic and original, which makes TV 'an artist's market.' "

Mike Judge and Alec Berg
Silicon Valley (HBO)

Growing its audience north of 6 million weekly viewers and nabbing seven Emmy nominations, *Silicon Valley* along with *Veep* has helped solidify HBO's comedy brand as it moves into over-the-top streaming. It also doesn't hurt that the show, created by Judge, 52, has become a Hollywood industry favorite.
First spec script Judge "It involved a redneck from another planet."
Go-to writers room takeout Berg "Once the food is packed into those boxes and lugged around in the back of a PA's car, it all kind of tastes the same."

Jenji Kohan
Orange Is the New Black (Netflix)

Kohan, 46, did not set out to redefine TV when she launched *Orange* in 2013. But that's exactly what she and the series have done since — presenting a level of diversity in casting rarely seen on TV and amassing legions of fans along the way. Netflix touts *Orange* as it continues to sell to new territories across the globe.
Last binge-watch The U.K. series *Catastrophe*
Go-to writers room takeout "Pitchoun Bakery & Cafe in downtown L.A. I'm digging the Atlantic sandwich lately."

Damon Lindelof
The Leftovers (HBO)

Lindelof, 42, returned to TV in 2014 with his follow-up to *Lost* only to consider pulling the plug after the first season of the adaptation of Tom Perrotta's mediation on the rapture got a mixed reception. Good thing he didn't: Critics are lapping up the second season, which premiered Oct. 4 and boasts a formidable score of 80 on Metacritic.
Biggest job challenge I didn't have five years ago "Making 'noise.' John Landgraf was right: There's too much TV."
Current showrunner role model "Noah Hawley. Brilliant show, brilliant writer, brilliant dresser."

John Ridley
American Crime (ABC)

It didn't light the ratings fire that ABC had hoped, but those 10 Emmy nominations (and a win for actress Regina King) offered some validation. The Oscar-winning *12 Years a Slave* scribe, 50, also has a detective pilot and a still-gestating Marvel series in the works at the network.
First spec "An episode of *Married ... With Children*."
Go-to writers room takeout "There's a joint in Burbank called Mama Hong's. They have these sriracha chicken wings that I love, and I force my writers to eat there every day."

Mike Schur and Dan Goor
Brooklyn Nine-Nine (Fox)

Fox is all-in on the third-year comedy, which helped usher live-action into Sunday's long-standing animation block. Goor, 40, serves as showrunner on *Brooklyn*, while exec producer Schur, 39, is focusing his post-*Parks and Recreation* time on Aziz Ansari's upcoming Netflix comedy, *Master of None*.
First spec Goor "For *The Office*, Michael Scott finds out that the weekend janitor had died in the Dunder Mifflin men's room."
Schur "For *Curb Your Enthusiasm*, Larry David gets Lasik eye surgery and becomes obsessed with people's physical imperfections."

Kurt Sutter
The Bastard Executioner (FX)

FX was so hot to follow ratings juggernaut *Sons of Anarchy* with another project from its proudly profane creator that *Executioner* bowed only nine months after *Sons*' end. The show, whose premiere averaged 3.6 million viewers, will have to build to reach *Sons*' heights, but Sutter, 55, remains a vital, vocal part of the FX brand.
Biggest job challenge I didn't have five years ago "My ego and swelling sense of entitlement."
Last binge-watch "*Killing the Kardashians*. ... No, wait, that was a pitch."

Sarah Treem
The Affair (Showtime)

The lack of Emmy love had to sting after her Golden Globe win for best drama, but Treem, 34, is still on top. *The Affair* returned for season two up 61 percent from its series premiere, with equally positive reviews.
Silliest network fight "None of them are silly. They're all essential, and I'm absolutely right, and I must win."
Strangest writing ritual "I have no more rituals. Those went away when I started having children."

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THE TOKEN IN THE WRITERS



IN THEIR IDEAL FORM, THE mentorship and training programs that the Big Four television networks use to identify and develop new writing talent also serve to jump-start the careers of diverse writers. Such was the case for Rashad Raisani, who got into NBCUniversal's Writers on the Verge program in 2007. Erika Kennair, who ran the program then and now is vp comedy development at ABC, pitched him for USA's *Burn Notice* and worked out an unusual three-year deal in which NBCU would pay Raisani's staff-writer (or entry-level) salary, even though the drama was being produced by Fox Television Studios. If the show decided to bring him back with the customary annual promotion the following year, Fox only would have to cover the pay difference until the NBCU contract expired. By the time *Burn Notice* ended in 2013, Raisani was a co-executive producer, paid no differently than the rest of the room. After helping develop NBC's short-lived *Allegiance* as executive producer, he signed an overall deal with Universal TV in February and now is focusing full-time on development. "There's no way I'd be here if it were not for Writers on the Verge because it made the decision for [showrunner] Matt Nix to hire me really easy since I was free," says Raisani. "I also benefited from the fact that there was a diversity hire before me named Ben Watkins [now creator of Amazon's *Hand of God*], and he was the star of the staff. He showed that 'diversity' doesn't mean 'second class.' "

Despite major strides in diversifying television with *Empire*, *Fresh Off the Boat* and *Black-ish*, the stats on writers in Hollywood still are sobering: Minorities make up 13.7 percent of writers rooms while comprising 37.9 percent of the population nationwide, with only 10 individuals of color (out of 73) on *THR*'s 2015 Power Showrunners list. There are no stats available on how many minority writers made it in TV without going through a program, though one Latino alum jokes: "John Ridley had to win an Oscar to get a television show." Which is why new-talent

ROOM

EVERY BROADCAST NETWORK, EAGER TO INTEGRATE THEIR SHOWS' STAFFS, RUNS PROGRAMS WHERE THEY'LL PAY FOR A SEASON'S WORK FOR A SCRIBE OF COLOR. THE RESULT? SOMETIMES A JOB. OTHER TIMES? RESENTMENT, EXPLOITATION BY SHOWRUNNERS AND A POSSIBLE BACKFIRE BECAUSE OF SHORT-TERM MONEY THAT DRIES UP IN SEASON TWO: 'IF YOU'RE DIVERSE, YOU'RE ONLY GOOD IF YOU'RE FREE'

BY REBECCA SUN ILLUSTRATION BY STEVE SCOTT

development and "inclusion" programs, such as the ones every single broadcast network supports — no doubt part good business, part public relations, part social conscience — are a standard and key part of writers room staffing. Like college scholarships for minorities, these programs are all about removing as many barriers to entry as possible, including financial ones. But with every good intention can come inadvertent side effects, from writers of color who are perceived as less qualified to the subsidization of first-season salaries that can lead to a "freebie" mentality among showrunners toward those scribes.

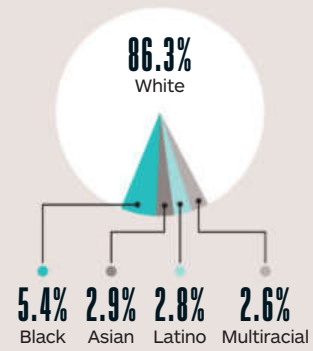
It all starts with the departments at each network that run the writing programs as well as recommend diversity hires for its roster of shows. Every year, each program accepts five to 12 applicants. The programs do not guarantee a staffing job afterward nor pay their writers for their participation — except for Disney-ABC, one of the oldest programs that began as a new-talent search with WGAW in 1990 and which provides its program writers a $961.54 weekly stipend. Diversity is defined broadly by the programs to include unique voices and experiences, but it usually refers to underrepresented demographics — including minorities, women and LGBT individuals. A diversity hire is a minority scribe who occupies a staff-writer position that is fully network-subsidized. Showrunners are thus incentivized to take on an unfamiliar face since his or her salary isn't coming out of the show's budget. There's no limit to the number of times a writer can be the diversity hire, provided he or she is fine with staying at entry-level pay.

Depending on whom you ask, getting into one of these programs — which involves submitting extensive writing samples and being selected by a network committee — can represent a launching pad for a career or a scarlet letter A for "affirmative action." The latter is a perception that some diversity hires feel they must overcome. "It's like meeting someone off Tinder versus organically at an event or through friends," says Ben Cory Jones, who was staffed on ABC Family's *Chasing Life* in 2013 from the Disney-ABC Writing Program, whose alumni include *Once Upon a Time* co-executive producer Jane Espenson, *Mad Men* executive producer Maria Jacquemetton and *Breaking Bad* co-executive producer George Mastras. "There's a lot of upfront judgment, and you have to work harder to prove you're a normal person."

The pressure to prove one's merit can be heightened for some diverse writers. "When you come from a program, the perception is, 'Yes, but can they write?' " says a participant of the Fox program (which was relaunched in 2011 to boost midcareer writers by invitation only from partner organizations like the National Association of Latino Independent Producers). "I heard a showrunner say that in response to finding out that a black writer had gotten staffed on a successful network show from a writing program." Adds a Latino writer who did Writers on the Verge (which just marked its 10th year as NBC's talent development and diversity program) and CBS' Writers Mentoring Program (created as part of the CBS Diversity Institute that Leslie Moonves launched in 2003): "There's a difference between how I'm treated in week one as opposed to week three or four. It's not that people say anything negative or nasty, but it has more to do with whether I'm listened to or interrupted and shut down. People have to see you do your job, and you have to exceed expectations."

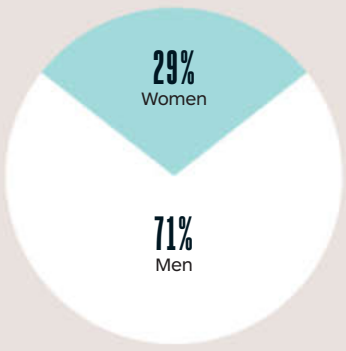
STATE OF THE WRITERS ROOMS

A LOOK AT THE 2013-14 SEASON'S 2,724 STAFFED SCRIBES SHOWS JUST HOW MUCH WOMEN AND MINORITIES WERE UNDERREPRESENTED



RACE

Nonwhite scribes combined to account for 13.7 percent of staffed TV writers. Considering that minorities comprised 37.9 percent of the U.S. population in 2014, proportionate representation in writers rooms was off by a factor of nearly 3-to-1.



GENDER

The female share of TV writing staff has stayed fairly flat over the past 15 years. The CW employed the most women writers in broadcast (44.3 percent), while several cable networks (VH1, MTV, A&E, BET and ABC Family) approached 50-50 gender parity.

Source: WGAW 2015 TV Staffing Brief

MEET THE NETWORK & STUDIO DIVERSITY HEADS



Tiffany Smith-Anoa'i
CBS
SVP Entertainment Diversity & Communications



Nicole Bernard
Fox
EVP Audience Strategy



Karen Horne
NBCUniversal
VP Programming Talent Development & Inclusion



Christopher Mack
Warner Bros.
VP Writers' Workshop

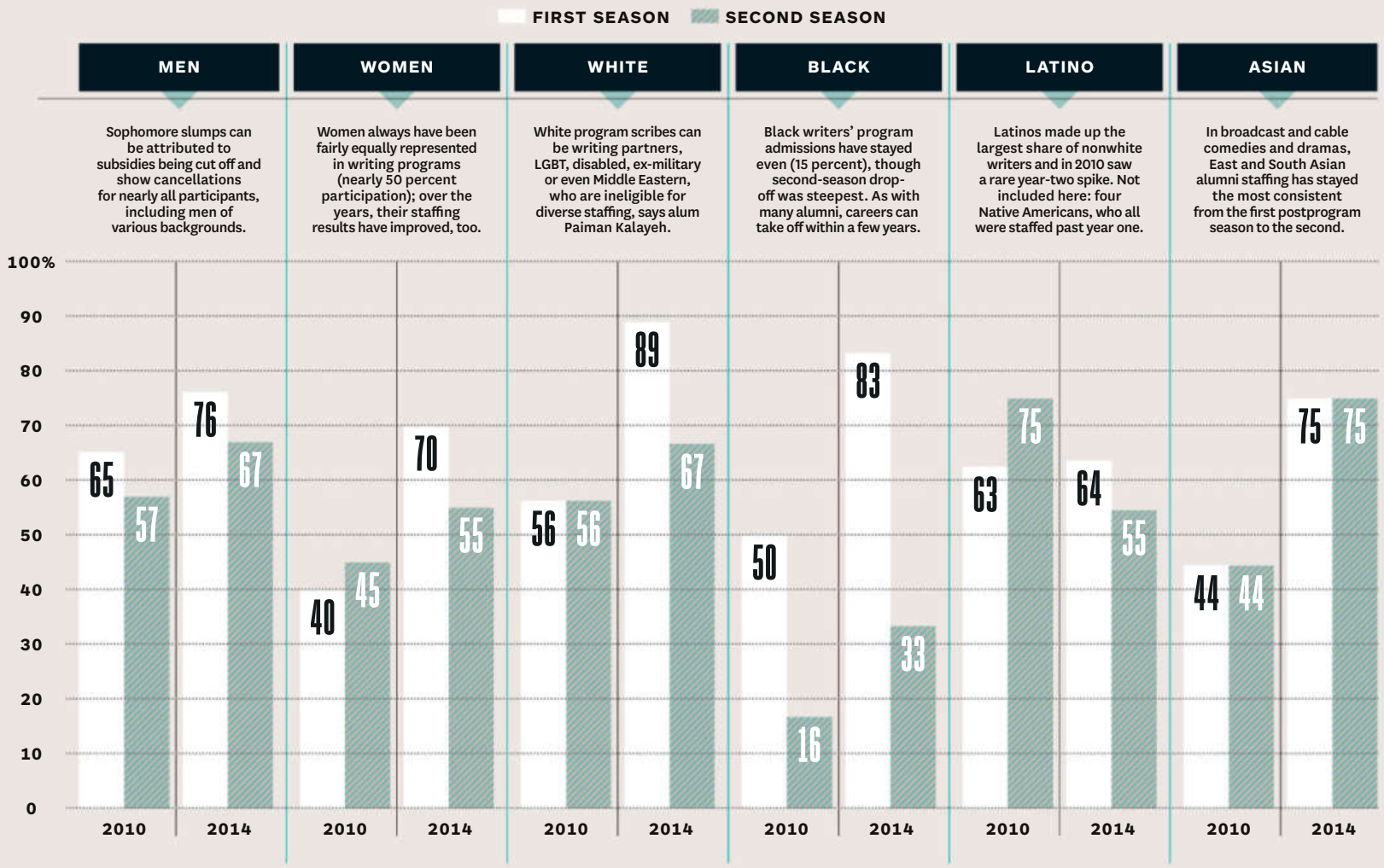


Tim McNeal
Disney-ABC Television Group
VP Creative Talent Development & Inclusion

SMITH-ANOA'I: MONTY BRINTON/CBS. BERNARD: JOE VILES/FOX. HORNE: COURTESY OF NBC UNIVERSAL. MACK: COURTESY OF WARNER BROS. MCNEAL: ABC/EDWARD HERRERA.

THE SOPHOMORE SLUMP

HOW MANY ALUMNI OF THE 5 WRITING PROGRAMS FOUND STAFFING POSITIONS AFTER THEIR FIRST-YEAR SUBSIDIES RAN OUT? *THR* CRUNCHED THE DATA FOR 2 CLASSES



Says Keto Shimizu, who was staffed on NBC's *The Cape* after completing Writers on the Verge in 2009: "Any baby writer — but especially a 'diversity hire' — needs to find a way to make herself indispensable. I wrote on the boards"— i.e., kept track of changing story beats — "after a co-EP suggested that as a concrete way to prove my usefulness." *The Cape* was canceled before Shimizu could return, but she landed on another NBCU show, Syfy's *Being Human*, again as the diversity hire. During her first season there, the show couldn't afford her beyond her 20 free weeks, but the following year Syfy and Canadian studio Muse scraped together the money to keep her in the room beyond the subsidized period.

Shimizu considers herself one of the fortunate ones (she now is a producer on The CW's *Arrow*) but says many of her friends haven't fared as well, as the network-funded diversity initiatives that help writers rooms avoid homogeneity also have created a system that can condition showrunners to regard diverse writers as unpaid labor. "After they are no longer free, the vast majority of diversity writers are released from their shows," says a Latina writer who wasn't hired on her network program (she later was independently staffed on a cable series). Jones agrees: "People who run the writing programs should stop pitching diverse writers as 'free' because it creates an affirmative action mentality."

Fox Audience Strategy executive vp Nicole Bernard fields lots of requests from the network's showrunners to subsidize writers of color from outside the Fox Writers Intensive program, a practice she discourages in order to not set a damaging precedent: "If I change our policy, I am subscribing to the industry perception that if you are diverse, you're only good if you're free."

On rare occasions when strained showrunners can't cover the cost of a diversity hire beyond the program, Disney-ABC vp creative talent development and inclusion Tim McNeal will subsidize half the salary from a safety-net reserve called the

1 Ten of *Empire*'s 14 writers are black, including four program alumni.

2 *American Crime*'s writers room includes black, white, Latino and Asian scribes.

3 Nearly half of *Fresh Off the Boat*'s staff is East or South Asian. All three rooms are half female.





"WHEN YOU COME FROM A PROGRAM, THE PERCEPTION IS, 'YES, BUT CAN THEY WRITE?' I HEARD A SHOWRUNNER SAY THAT." A DIVERSITY HIRE

breakage fund. "It's important that shows don't look at this as a free pass to get an extra body, so I ask them to match dollar for dollar so they have skin in the game," he says. "This is a onetime payment."

But even this extension leaves some diverse scribes stalled on the first rung, whereas a full year of experience typically would get a staff writer promoted to story editor. The perception of tokenism creates the impression of interchangeability, which led to one show abruptly releasing its two diverse staff writers with the explanation that it "wanted fresh diversity." Another factor is the trend in increasingly top-heavy writers rooms as a knee-jerk defense against cancellation, which leaves little room in the budget for newer writers. "Showrunners are hiring only upper-level writers on staff and taking the new crop of 'free' diversity writers where applicable," says Michael Perri, who was staffed on NBC's *State of Affairs* last year from Writers on the Verge. "I have heard time and time again by showrunners, 'I'd love to have a larger staff with writers at all levels, but I need to hire seasoned producers who can hit the ground running.' It's a vicious circle because these showrunners hire their friends and then the show lacks a well-rounded staff with diverse perspectives."

Adds a diversity hire who has completed three network programs and is on her third show as a staff writer: "I find myself a little bit in this cycle, but what outweighs the concerns about being the diversity writer is the opportunity that you might get staffed."



EMPIRE: CHUCK HODES/FOX. *BLACK-ISH*: ABC/ISABELLA VOSMIKOVA. *AMERICAN*: ABC/BOB D'AMICO.

Meredith Averill, NBC program alum and creator of The CW's *Star-Crossed*, offers a showrunner's perspective: "If you are in a situation where the studio is paying for the first year and then the show is expected to after that, it may mean they would have to lose another writer or that the show wouldn't be able to afford to bring on any new writers. As a showrunner, I had to make the same calculations. Ultimately, this can put a writer at a slight disadvantage because the show is taking on a financial burden it did not have to take on in season one."

Several programs have made progress in addressing this problem. If an NBC show promotes a diverse staff writer to story editor in the second year, the network will subsidize half the new salary. And if a Fox show wants to bring back a program participant at a higher level, Bernard's breakage fee will cover up to the staff-writer rate.

To some observers, the opportunity to nab a diversity staff-writer gig can seem an unfair advantage. "People have said to my face, 'It' easier because you're black,' " says one female writer, "which is utterly dismissive of all the hard work I've put in." When people imply to Raisani that his program gave him a leg up, he doesn't deny it but notes: "Writers on the Verge gets 2,000 scripts a year, and they have eight slots. It's more competitive than any staff job. You've already gone through the gantlet." Adds Marcos Luevanos, an alum of two programs, "It's easier to get into Harvard than the NBC program."

Thomas Wong, a graduate of the ABC and Fox programs and a story editor on Fox's *Minority Report*, says studios and networks can only do so much to entice showrunners to diversify their rooms: "Funding is key, but it's the perception that needs to change. Hiring diverse writers shouldn't be seen as a burden or an obligation. We bring value. We have a different perspective. Over time, as diverse writers rise through the ranks to become decision makers, it will be a nonissue."

Until then, most participants are grateful for the programs, for, as the Latina writer puts it: "I'd hate to see what our statistics would be like without these diversity initiatives." THR

'THE *EMPIRE* EFFECT IS REAL — BUT NOT WHAT YOU THINK'

WHAT THE FOX HIT HAS WROUGHT FOR A BLACK WRITER WHO HAS WORKED IN TV FOR 5 YEARS, INCLUDING ON AN EMMY-NOMINATED SHOW **BY ANONYMOUS**

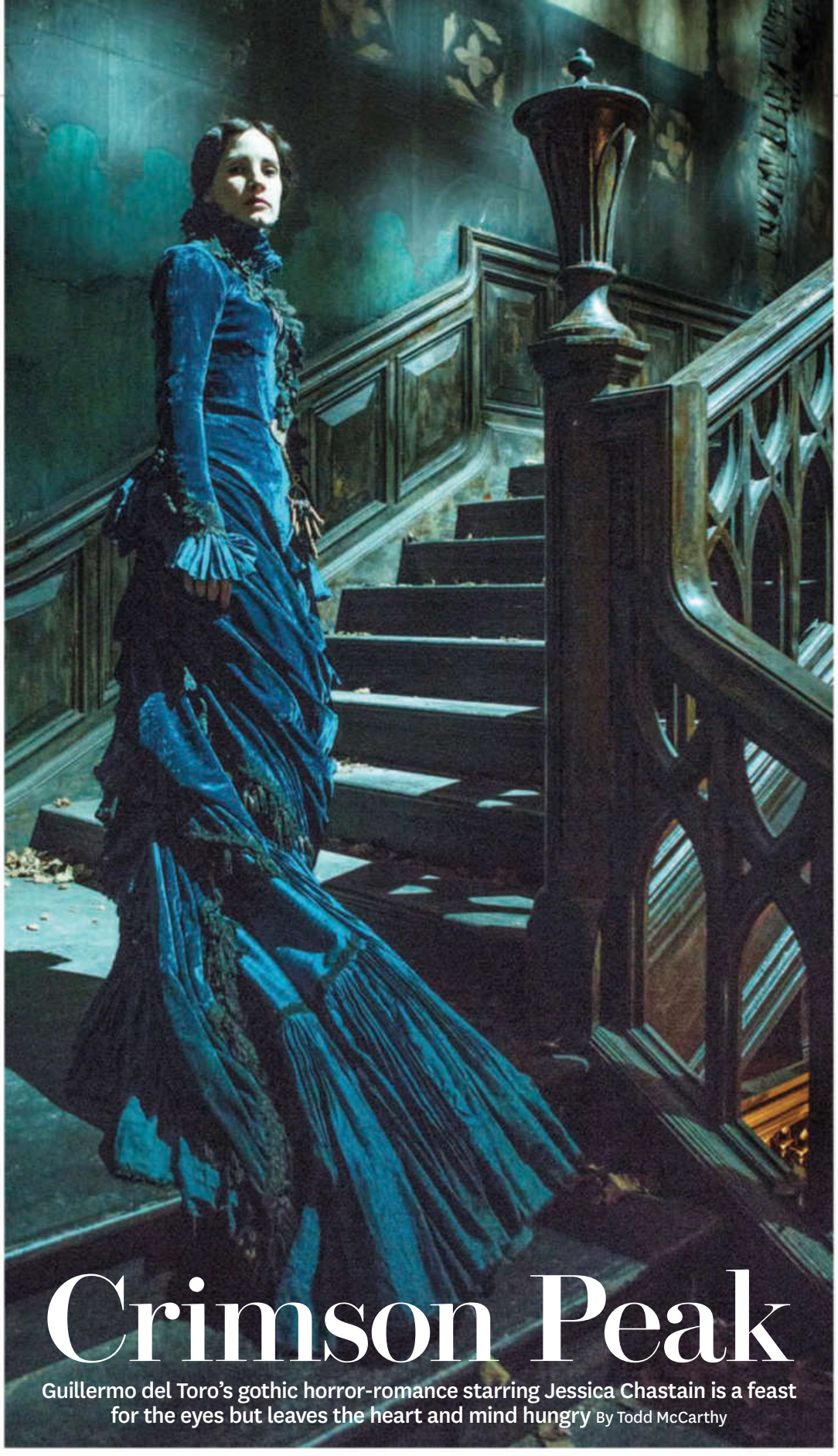
On a good day, after I pitched my heart out to a roomful of executives, they would not dismiss my creativity and ask if I had an "*Empire*-esque" idea to pitch. Why would I pitch *Empire*? I don't rap, my father isn't a rapper and even though my mother did spend time in jail, it wasn't to serve a 17-year drug sentence. Yes, the *Empire* effect is real — but it's not what you might think. The good news: If you're an established writer of color, you can get a pitch meeting. The bad news: Everyone in Hollywood is looking for the next *Empire* from every black writer — because I cannot possibly have any other idea or perspective. My creative parameters are limited to the next *Scandal*, *Black-ish* or a TV version of *Straight Outta Compton*. (Side note: The *Straight Out of Calabasas* pitch that Fox purchased [a comedy about two white parents who live in the celebrity enclave and whose kid is a basketball prodigy] is a complete abomination and the reason I wonder why I even try.)

On a good day, my representation would submit me for shows that tonally fit my writing style and not merely for shows that happen to have the prototypical "person of color" character. So, I can only write for the sassy black, sassy Latino or sassy gay friend? As a person of color, I have no choice but to consider the perspectives of others!

On a good day, I wouldn't have to decide to ignore racist and sexist statements because I don't want to be seen as an outsider.

On a good day, after hearing news of my meeting with a showrunner, a white male colleague wouldn't ask to be my writing partner so he can "get in on that coveted diversity spot." Apparently, there is a misconception about the diversity spot: It is not a guarantee; it is merely a suggestion. And the suggestion comes with a bribe, since the salary for that spot is covered by the studio or network. Yes, it seems a lot of showrunners have to be bribed to consider taking on a diversity writer. Still, my "friend" thinks it's OK to passive-aggressively joke about what, in many instances, is my only opportunity to staff on a show. He thinks it's somehow an advantage to be looked upon as the writer that agents pitch by saying, "They're free." Since when did working harder than everyone in the room only to get excluded when you're no longer free become an advantage?

As I told him, I would switch positions any day. I'd prefer to vie for one of 100 spots like him than the five or six left for me because I am free.



Chastain plays an Englishwoman who torments her brother's new bride.

Crimson Peak

Guillermo del Toro's gothic horror-romance starring Jessica Chastain is a feast for the eyes but leaves the heart and mind hungry By Todd McCarthy

GUILLERMO DEL TORO TRIES his elegant best to shake the cobwebs from a musty genre but still ends up telling a traditional and predictable haunted house yarn in his new film, *Crimson Peak*. The gifted fantasy/sci-fi/horror specialist has made a movie that's bloody, and bloody stylish, one that's certainly unequaled in its field for the beauty of its camerawork, sets, costumes and effects. But it's also conventionally plotted and not surprising or scary, as it resurrects hoary horror tropes in routine, rather than fresh or subversive, ways. It's a thousand times more elaborate than the most recent demented domicile tale of note, last year's *The Babadook*, but not an ounce as disturbing.

The screenplay by the director and the veteran scribe Matthew Robbins is informed by the tradition of gothic melodrama. But no matter how seductively the movie transports the viewer into its spheres of interest, one is still left with a film that makes utterly unironic use of such chestnuts as an evil sister-in-law poisoning her victim via the tea she serves; a spooky house conveniently situated miles from the nearest neighbor; strict instructions never to descend beneath the house's main floor; and a frightened heroine continually sweeping through dark rooms carrying a candelabra.

The damsel soon to be distressed is Edith Cushing (Mia Wasikowska), an aspiring Buffalo, N.Y., writer circa 1900 who fancies herself the new Mary Shelley and is the only child of industrialist Carter Cushing (Jim Beaver). Although beautiful and highly eligible, Edith is somewhat of a recluse and resists the attentions of childhood friend turned handsome doctor Alan (Charlie Hunnam).

Weakening her defenses is newly arrived Sir Thomas Sharpe (Tom Hiddleston), an Englishman who has come, accompanied by his less congenial older sister Lady Lucille Sharpe (Jessica Chastain), seeking American backing for a "clay harvester" — a mining machine that will do work it normally takes



Jack Black (second from left) in *Goosebumps*, out Oct. 16.

R.L. Stine's Top 5 Scary Reads

With *Goosebumps* in theaters and new books *The Lost Girl* and *Night of the Puppet People* on shelves, the author, 72, ranks his favorite freaky fiction As told to Andy Lewis



Stine

1. *Something Wicked This Way Comes* (Ray Bradbury)
Bradbury is a hero of mine. He turned me into a reader when I was 9 or 10. Before that, it was only comics. This librarian told me, "If you like comic books, you'll like Ray Bradbury." [The book] is about a boy in the Midwest — I'm from the Midwest — who sneaks out late at night and goes to where a carnival is setting up, and it turns out to be an extremely evil carnival.

2. 'The Black Cat' (Edgar Allan Poe)
In junior high, we ordered from the Scholastic Book Club, and it had an edition of Poe stories. "The Black Cat" was in it. [In the story,] they can't get rid of [the cat], so they wall it up, but that doesn't kill it. It's a very creepy story.

3. *Misery* (Stephen King)
It's my favorite King book and it may be the best book ever written about writers and editors. His "editor" has him chained to the bed and she's going to cut off parts of him unless he writes what she wants him to write. That's terrifying to a writer!

4. *Pet Sematary* (Stephen King)
It's an amazing horror novel. They bring their pet back to life, and when it comes back, it isn't quite the same. That, to me, is just an amazing, creepy premise.

5. *A Simple Plan* (Scott Smith)
I really admire this book about four friends who find a bag of money from a crashed airplane. They're going to hide the money and wait and make sure it's safe, but they start doing terrible things to one another. It's scary to see how friends can get out of control. It's a brilliant plot.

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many men to accomplish. But as shrewd old Cushing announces, "There's something not quite right about them." He's absolutely right.

The old man pays the ultimate price for his skepticism in a horribly violent murder scene, leaving Edith free to follow her heart, if not her mind, to England as Thomas' virgin bride. Unfortunately, Lady Lucille is part of the package — a part that could be described as self-anointed jailer and nurse. This sort of malevolent gatekeeper-of-the-family-secrets character has populated many a fusty melodrama over the decades, and the sexual jealousy and hostility Lady Lucille feels for Edith is nothing new, either. Now a prisoner in a cold, dilapidated mansion, Edith must endure encounters with a grasping black ghost as she sneaks about the house discovering secrets and trying to gain any advantage she can over the desperate Lucille, who feels her brother's affection slipping away from her.

The leads all play their roles with conviction, but the one who best captures the spirit of the time is Beaver, a veteran character actor still not widely enough seen on the big screen.



Hiddleston is a man with a haunted house and a sinister sister.

It's likely that no previous rendition of this sort of sexually twisted, spectrally haunted fright story ever has been served up with so much stylistic sauce as del Toro has poured into *Crimson Peak*. The immersive attention to detail in regard to the fanciful props, glorious fabrics, layers of clothing, home furnishings, bathroom ceramics and paintings on the walls indeed feels compulsive but never fetishistic. Special mention must be made of the contributions of production designer Tom Sanders, costume designer Kate Hawley, cinematographer Dan Laustsen and their staffs.

Dramatically, however, *Crimson Peak* plays like a 1946 film made seven decades later; only the technical aspects and gore level identify it as a product of its own era. Rather than revising or reconsidering genre conventions, del Toro plays it all very straight. The only surprise is the lack of same.

Release date *Oct. 16 (Universal)*
Cast *Mia Wasikowska, Jessica Chastain, Tom Hiddleston, Charlie Hunnam, Jim Beaver*
Director *Guillermo del Toro*
Rated R, 119 minutes



RAPID-ROUND Q&A

Peter Sarsgaard

The *Experimenter* star, 44, gets grilled on bossy directors, Johnny Depp, his marriage to Maggie Gyllenhaal, his Hollywood hates, Hillary, Trump and more

By Pamela McClintock

In *Experimenter* (in theaters Oct. 16), you play Stanley Milgram, who did research studies on obedience and authority. Of the directors you've worked with, who gave the most orders?
Martin Campbell [2011's *Green Lantern*]. I enjoyed it. In a big movie like that, you kind of need a general.

And the fewest?
It's a tie between Kelly Reichardt [2013's *Night Moves*] and Woody Allen [2013's *Blue Jasmine*]. Woody Allen is binary; it's either yes or no. There's no great or bad — just yes or no.

Describe your *Experimenter* co-star Winona Ryder in three words.
Obsessive, eccentric, kind.

And your *Black Mass* co-star Johnny Depp?
Impossible. Johnny is one of the most artistic people I've acted with. I feel like he created his own form of acting. I greatly admire him.

You've built a career in indies. Do you have a dream big-studio assignment?
No. Life is really nice. Why would I make it more complicated?

Your favorite thing about living in Brooklyn?
The drum circle in Prospect Park. I'm a runner. I'll hit the drum circle on my second lap around the park. And I'll just take a minute and shake my sweaty ass all over the place.

The thing you hate most about Hollywood?
The ranking system. It's like high school. You're like, "F—k those guys! I don't care who's most popular!" But it gets talked about so constantly that part of you gets drawn into [it].

The best thing about being married to another actor [Maggie Gyllenhaal]?
Sympathy.

And the worst?
Scheduling.

You and Maggie have two daughters. Do you like living in such a female household?
I wouldn't want it any other way. I don't really hang out with guys.

What do you hate most about seeing yourself onscreen?
When my intention with the role has been muddied by the way it was edited. I mean, I'm not especially attracted to my own acting, and I'm not especially repulsed by [it]. I like it pretty well.

Your favorite of your screen roles?
[2005's] *The Dying Gaul*.

And of your stage roles?
[2015's] *Hamlet*.

Your dream film role?
I have always wanted to play English soccer player David Icke, who dropped out of soccer suddenly and said he had found something called the "truth vibrations." I love the idea of somebody dropping out of something successful to do something so ethereal and esoteric.

What would you do if you dropped out of acting?
I loved this course paleo-ethnobotany [study of people's use of plants in ancient times] when I was in school. So [I'd do] something investigative and academic.

Hillary Clinton or Bernie Sanders?
Bernie Sanders. I went and met him and saw him speak at a town hall yesterday.

Your take on Donald Trump?
I don't know. He's, I guess, mildly entertaining in the way that checkers is or something.



Sarsgaard is controversial social psychologist Stanley Milgram and Ryder is his wife in Michael Almereyda's *Experimenter*.

SARSGAARD: DAN STEINBERG/INVISION FOR *THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER*/AP IMAGES. *EXPERIMENTER*: COURTESY OF MAGNOLIA PICTURES. *CRIMSON*: COURTESY OF UNIVERSAL PICTURES.

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The Knick

Steven Soderbergh's period hospital drama returns to Cinemax for a bold, bloody, brilliant second season

By Tim Goodman



Holland (second from left) is a surgeon battling racial barriers.

HALF OF WHAT MAKES A GREAT SHOW great seems to be coming up with a premise so unique it can't be ignored, or twisting a well-worn genre into something fresh. Of course, lots of shows find themselves midway to greatness and fall flat because they can't follow through with the other half of the recipe for success: the execution — in other words, the writing, acting and visuals needed to keep things intriguing.

When *The Knick* burst onto the scene last year — Cinemax's bid to make itself a go-to destination rather than just another HBO property — the singularity of its premise was undeniable. Set in New York in 1900, when medicine was more trial and error than science and certainty, it was essentially a horror show masquerading as a hospital drama. Series creators and writers Jack Amiel and Michael Begler were exploring the notion of doctors not as saviors and healers but as last-chance magicians trying to make ailments disappear without fully understanding them.

Yet *The Knick* also stood out for its remarkable pedigree. Every episode was directed by Steven Soderbergh, the Academy Award winner who had decided to "retire" from filmmaking, and starred Oscar-nominated actor Clive Owen, playing brilliant, cocaine-addicted surgeon John Thackery.

Happily, season two looks to be as impressive an achievement as season one, which ended with Thackery being sent to a rehab facility after his rampant addiction led to a catastrophic surgery on a young girl. Meanwhile, the struggling Knickerbocker Hospital may be shutting down as its financial backers seek to move it uptown — away, essentially, from the immigrant patients who can't pay their bills.

Thack, as he is called, has not exactly been getting the therapy he needs; to treat his cocaine addiction, he's been prescribed heroin from drug manufacturer Bayer (just one of several true-life medical stories that Amiel and Begler have researched and mined effectively for drama). While he's away, the African-American Dr. Algernon Edwards (a brilliant Andre Holland) is the acting chief of surgery, a triumph over racial injustice — though, of course, not entirely. Season two finds Edwards, always fighting harder and suffering more because of his skin color, hoping to hold on to the top slot whether the Knickerbocker moves uptown or not.



Owen is back as a drug-addled New York doctor circa 1900.

The rivalry between Thack and Edwards is a compelling storyline that continues to develop, and the wonderful supporting cast, which includes Eve Hewson, Michael Angarano, Chris Sullivan and Juliet Rylance, is present and accounted for.

But there's no escaping the fact that Soderbergh is the essential element here. He put 10 beautifully crafted episodes together last year, offering a master class in mood-making that shifted deftly between the macabre (all the surgeries and diseases) and the mystical (Thack's drug-fueled daily existence, full of demons and visions). The second season, too, benefits from Soderbergh's visual flourishes and acute sense of lighting, sound, music and composition. The first couple of new episodes tell the John Thackery comeback story, which culminates in some beautifully shot scenes on a sailboat. You can tell that Soderbergh delighted in this unexpected detour because it gets his camera out of the dank, dark Knickerbocker, with its black and brown tones, and out into the sun, where he revels in white sails, blue water and pale skin.

It's one of many sequences that illustrate the series' aesthetic accomplishment, reminding us that a truly great director is handling every moment of every episode. For those of us who have a bit of a harder time stomaching the gory medical stuff — a peeled-back nose here, a hand groping around inside a gurgling chest cavity there — the payoff indeed is in relishing the skill and artistry that Soderbergh pours into the show.

The Knick is more than just a stylistic tour de force. The writing is outstanding, the characters evolve in interesting ways, and the acting is consistently top-notch. The series also is much, much more than a doctor drama with fancy costumes — it's a darkly humorous rogues' gallery of early 20th century American types and a haunting portrait of medical professionals who are, despite their heroism, courage and knowledge, more likely to kill you than save you.

Airdate *10 p.m. Friday, Oct. 16 (Cinemax)*

KNICK: MARY CYBULSKI/HBO (2).

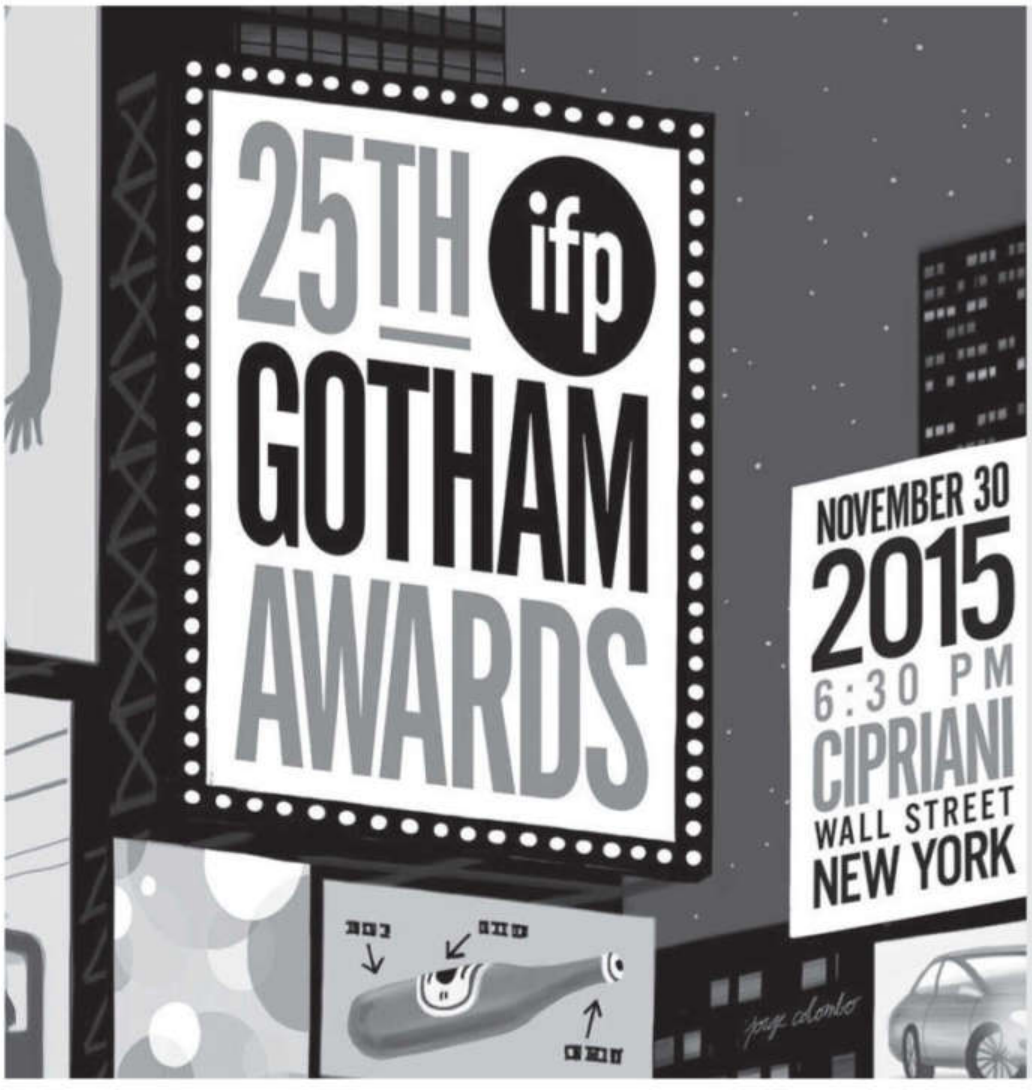
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"You can't premeditatively create that," says Murphy (with Michele) of *Glee*'s early juggernaut status. "That's something the culture creates."

MURPHY
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 55

had the rights to Piper Kerman's memoir before Jenji Kohan. "I just could never figure out how to do it," he admits. "And then the option lapsed, and it became this great big thing …"

WHEN I ARRIVE AT MURPHY'S home in Beverly Hills later that week, his 2-year-old, Logan, is wrapped tightly around his torso, his head tucked into his father's chest.

But the shyness quickly subsides, and soon the bubbly child is ushering me to the playroom. "Come see all my trucks," he says, as Murphy and I trail him through their seven-bedroom Spanish colonial home. Sure enough, an entire wall of the playroom is lined with trucks: dump trucks, fire trucks, garbage trucks. "This is the child my father wanted to have," says Murphy, grinning widely as he watches his son play happily with his toys. "I have such perspective on what I wished I would've had as a child now that I have children," he'll tell me later. "So, I find myself saying to them constantly: 'You're special. You can do it. I'm proud of you.' "

Murphy ultimately would get the validation that he'd long craved from his father, but not until he was 40. I ask what inspired it. "I became successful," he says. "I think my father's fear was always that I was going to die, either of violence or of AIDS. He didn't know what to do or what to feel, and I think I was a terrifying person to him." Murphy's father died a few years ago, right before Logan was born. He says he has made a concerted effort to include his mother in his children's lives, and over time he has begun to forgive her, too.

"My parents aren't villains to me anymore," he says. "If I had a 15-year-old child who was having an affair with a 22-year-old, I'd do the same, if not worse. It's like my entire narrative has completely bottomed out because I get it now. Now that I have children, everything I used to think was my story or was my way in has changed. So I can't dine out on that story anymore, and it was such a part of my f—ing war."

It's with this new mind-set that Murphy's thinking about the next stage of his life. He talks a lot about wanting to spend more time with his family, just as he does about becoming the type of mentor he's never been, much less had himself. The latter already has begun with a young writer named Maggie Cohen, with whom he and Kevin Spacey are developing a TV version of *Sin in the Second City*, a book about two sisters who operated an early 1900s bordello. He's determined not to fill Di Loreto's position but rather run his own company, because he insists he doesn't want a wall around him going forward. In fact, Murphy recently stood onstage at a Fox retreat and urged even the lower-level executives to reach out directly with ideas and feedback.

"I'm trying," he says. "I want to be approachable. My mother used to ask me when I was a kid, 'Why are you so cold?' And I'd say, 'I'm not cold. I'm shy.' But I think I was bracing for attack half the time, and only recently have I sort of dealt with that."

He fiddles with his coffee cup. "It's like the more successful you get, the more isolated you get, and my life was lonely for a long time." He pauses. "I don't want to be that person anymore." THR

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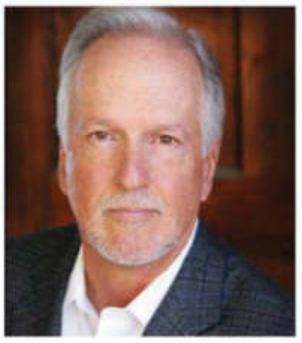
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TOKYO FEST ON THE EDGE



The Walk, with Joseph Gordon-Levitt, will open the festival Oct. 22.

With an emphasis on local content, Japan's premier film event has lost its balance — and its buzz — say insiders By Gavin J. Blair

DESPITE ENTERING ITS 30S THIS YEAR, THE TOKYO International Film Festival is, in some senses, still struggling to carve out a definitive identity. Within Asia, the event's 28th edition (it initially ran every other year) faces serious competition from the Busan International Film Festival's clear indie focus, the Hong Kong fest's old-fashioned star power and Shanghai's rising glamour, and globally, its acronym is associated more readily with Toronto.

The Tokyo fest is not without its charms, however. In addition to taking place in one of the world's great megalopolises, featuring exemplary food, service and infrastructure, it is run with characteristic Japanese efficiency that sees events start and finish on time — though industry types accustomed to a more laid-back approach often need to adjust.

Following the five-year reign of **Tom Yoda**, whose extensive global connections helped restore the star power the festival somewhat had lost (guests included **Jackie Chan**, **Julianne Moore** and **Sigourney Weaver**), the past three years, under **Yasushi Shiina**, have seen a deliberate shift to Japanese fare. Organizers now must perform a balancing act, promoting the local industry while maintaining the appeal of an international event.

The Tokyo fest caught industry flak when its 2015 lineup was announced Sept. 29, with three Japanese films selected for the main competition, a major anime showcase, a couple of retrospectives on veteran Japanese actors, a Masters of J-Horror section, a pair of remastered **Akira Kurosawa** classics and a new Japan Now section focusing on contemporary local filmmakers — all combining to make it feel a little too parochial for some.


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"Tokyo is an A-class film festival but doesn't have the glitz and stature that should go with that. It's still terribly insular. I think one of the answers is to put money into an independent entity to run [the fest]," says **Daren Afshar**, head of Japan-based boutique label Winery Productions, who devotes much of his energy to building links between the local industry and Hollywood. "Tokyo is a fantastic city, but L.A. industry people need a reason to get on a plane and fly 12 hours west."

Shiina dismisses that notion, telling *THR*: "It's clear the number of foreign titles hasn't gone down — the number of Japanese films has gone up. We're keeping the international flavor." He adds that his plans always have included screening more Japanese films, and that he "really wants to see Japanese directors go abroad more."

Programming director **Yoshi Yatabe** says that by adding a day to the fest, organizers were able to devote more screen time to Japanese titles — a move he says was supported roundly by the local industry. "The Japan Now section filled something we thought was missing.


Singer

Industry people often asked us why they didn't have more opportunity to catch up on Japanese titles," says Yatabe.

The festival will not be a Hollywood-free zone: The competition jury is headed by director **Bryan Singer**, and **Robert Zemeckis** will be on hand for the opening-night screening of his tightrope drama *The Walk*. Unlike 2014, however, when Disney Animation's Oscar-winning *Big Hero 6* had its world premiere at the Tokyo fest, *Walk* already has premiered stateside.

The outlook is better on the festival's market side — retitled the Japan Content Showcase but still referred to by most as TIFFCOM. Despite being sandwiched between Busan in early October and the American Film Market, set to kick off Nov. 4 in Santa Monica, all booths had been booked by early October by a record 343 exhibitors, according to new market head **Fumio Takagi**. A thawing in political relations between Japan and its neighbors has helped boost buyer and exhibitor numbers from China and South Korea.

Shiina is realistic about the Tokyo fest's place within the film world but believes it is headed in the right direction: "This is the level we're at after 30 years, but I think the trajectory has been on the up in recent years." THR

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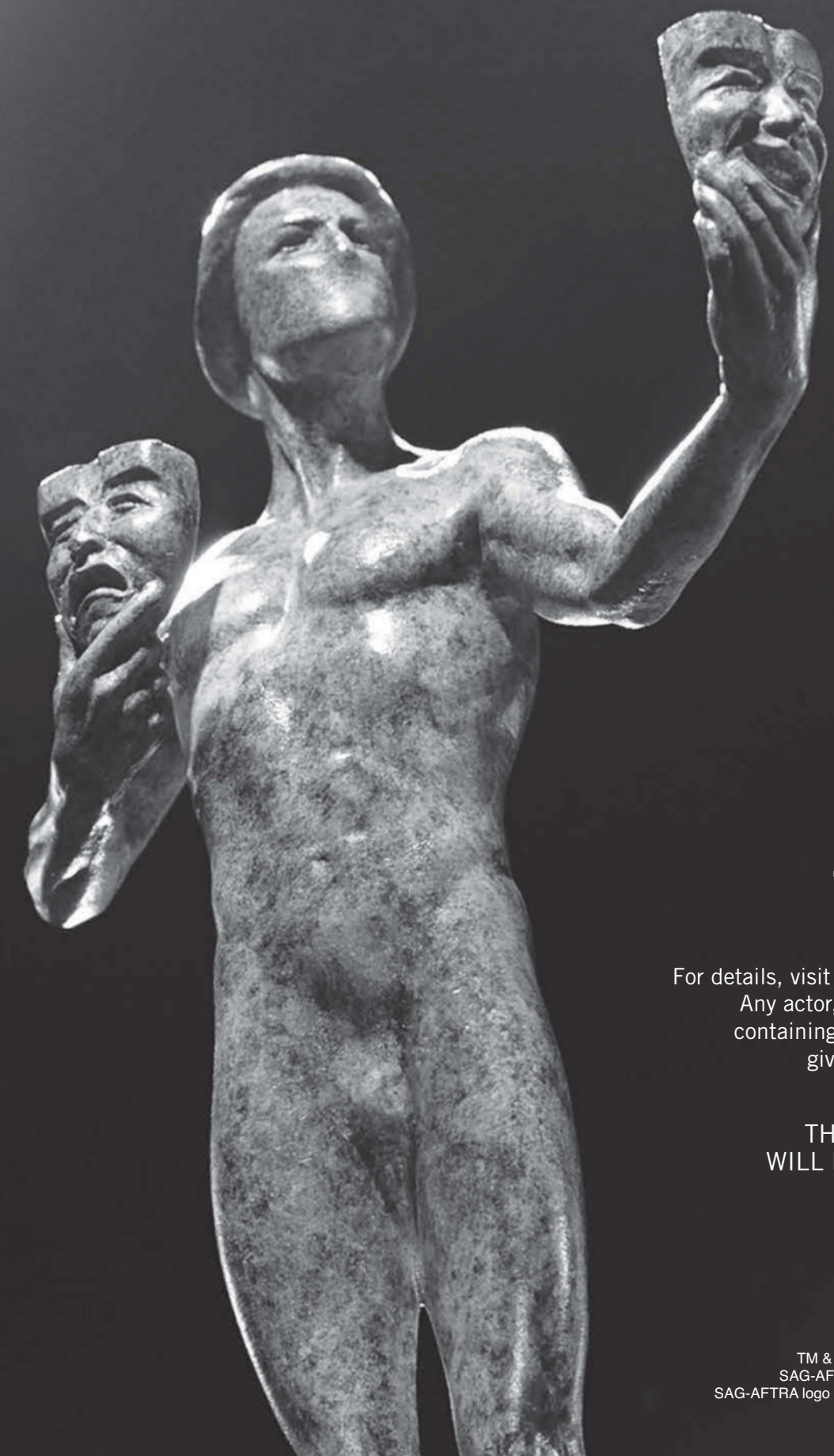
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LOCATION SPOTLIGHT: TV



THE L.A. WAY: 'I CAN ROLL OUT OF BED AND BE AT WORK'

Tax credits, convenience and star power (paging Lady Gaga) explain why TV production here is up 12 percent this year as far-flung shows come home to Hollywood By Bryn Elise Sandberg

FOR ITS FIRST THREE SEASONS, *Veep* was shot in an old mattress warehouse 30 minutes outside of Baltimore. "There was nothing," says **Timothy Simons**, who plays obnoxious White House staffer Jonah. "You had a parking lot, and that was it." But this fall, the Emmy-winning HBO comedy started filming at its new home at Paramount Studios in Hollywood, and the move has opened up a new world for the show's actors. "When I have a couple of hours off, I go into Larchmont, get some coffee and say hi to a friend," says Simons. "These are uncharted waters for me."


Gaga


Simons

Convenience is only one reason Los Angeles is seeing a resurgence of TV production this past quarter, with shows like *American Horror Story* (now on the Fox lot) and *Secrets & Lies* (Paramount) also relocating to the city. Chalk the pilgrimage up primarily to California's revamped tax credits program. In May, the state replaced its old lottery with a new ranking system heavily based on a production's ability to create jobs and boosted annual incentives from $100 million to $330 million. In an attempt to lure existing shows, a portion of those funds specifically is reserved for relocating series.

It's clearly working: TV production in L.A. hit a record high this quarter, up 12 percent compared with last year, according to a FilmL.A. report released Oct. 6. Shoot days have jumped a whopping 168 percent for sitcoms, 24 percent for dramas and 32 percent for pilots (though reality TV, normally the region's largest production segment, is down 20 percent). "You can't compete with the talent pool both in front of and behind the camera," says **Amy Lemisch**, executive director of the California Film Commission. "There's an ease to working here in terms of the level of expertise, the availability of the equipment and, for most people, the proximity to home."

And not just to home. *American Horror Story*, which shot its past two seasons in Louisiana, returned to L.A. for its latest installment, *Hotel*, in large part because creator **Ryan Murphy** wanted to be closer to his other FX anthology series, *American Crime Story*, also shooting at Fox in Century City. "You often see Ryan hustling between the two shows on the lot," says 20th Century Fox TV head of production **Jim Sharp**. "That wouldn't be possible [elsewhere]." Another benefit of shooting in Hollywood: Stars like **Lady Gaga** are much easier to wrangle. "We get her for [only so] much time, and that's it," says Sharp. "I don't see that happening if you add the travel time to Louisiana."

Even shows that aren't getting rebates are finding reasons to stick around L.A. *Colony*, USA's upcoming alien-invasion drama from **Carlton Cuse** and **Ryan Condal**, has taken root at CBS Radford in Studio City (home to *Brooklyn Nine-Nine* and *The Odd Couple*). "We made it work, but not without campaigning from Carlton," says Condal, who desperately wanted his L.A.-set series to look "geographically authentic."

"There's a fun sense of history being on one of the old lots," says *Veep*'s new showrunner **David Mandel**, noting that creator **Armando Iannucci**'s London base was a key reason the show had been shooting on the East Coast. "The stages have a plaque that tells you what else was shot there — *Happy Days*, *Family Ties* and whatnot."

Indeed, for the cast of *Veep*, moving production to L.A. was the best thing to happen since last month's Emmys. "The timing was perfect," says new dad (his wife had a baby six months ago) **Reid Scott**, who plays ousted vice presidential aide Dan Egan. "I can just roll out of bed and be at work." THR

Top: On the L.A. set of *American Horror Story*, which recently relocated production from Louisiana. Bottom: *Veep*'s Julia Louis-Dreyfus now shoots her HBO sitcom about the first female president on a soundstage at Paramount.



AMERICAN GAGA: SUZANNE TENNER/FX NETWORKS. *VEEP*. SIMONS: PATRICK HARBRON/HBO.

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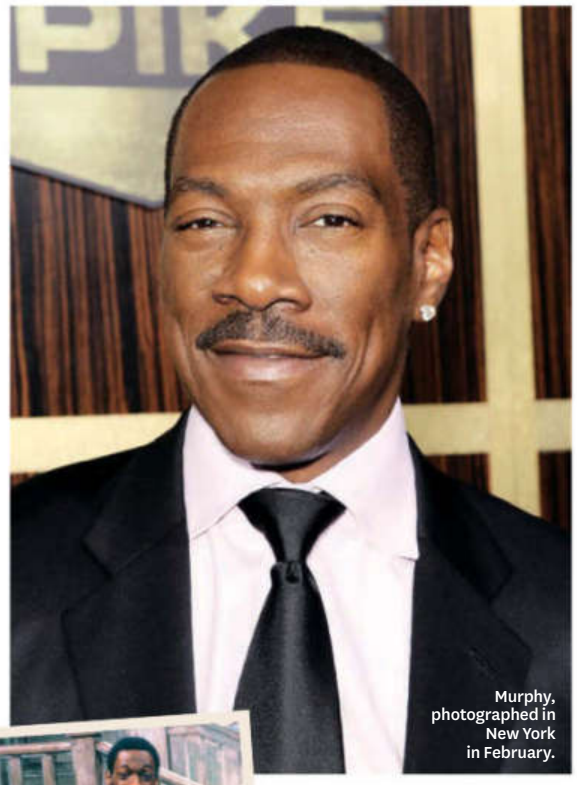
MARK TWAIN PRIZE

THE MUHAMMAD ALI OF COMEDY

Expect ardent tributes (and more than a few F-bombs) as Eddie Murphy receives the Mark Twain Prize for American Humor at the Kennedy Center By Andy Lewis

JOE PISCOPO RECALLS the first appearance of a teen named **Eddie Murphy** on *Saturday Night Live* because he was sitting next to him. It was Dec. 6, 1980, and the two were about to launch into a "Sports Guy" bit about whether too many white men were playing in the NBA. Soon, Piscopo and all of America would squirm at Murphy's visceral comic presence. But in the moment, right before cameras went live, Piscopo tells *THR* that Murphy, then 19, was whispering to himself, "The kids at Roosevelt High are never going to believe this."

Now, 35 years later, the enduring comic genius of Murphy, 54, will be celebrated Oct. 18, when the Kennedy Center presents him with its Mark Twain Prize for American Humor. An A-list roster — including **Chris Rock**, **Dave Chappelle**, **Whitney Cummings** and longtime friend **Arsenio Hall** — will fete Murphy's groundbreaking talent and perform during the two-hour show, which will air Nov. 23 on PBS.



Murphy, photographed in New York in February.



"Mister Robinson's Neighborhood" debuted on *SNL* in 1981.



Murphy does raunch on the 1983 HBO special *Delirious*.

With the event looming, participating comedians already are dishing praise with a wink. "Eddie became every character he impersonated. He found every nuance, every movement. He's musical and comedic — he's a genius!" says **George Lopez**. "Now you can have jacked-up hair and run for president!"



Morgan



Rock

Fellow *SNL* castmember **Kevin Nealon** jokes that Murphy made comedy "sexy," giving props to his **James Brown** impression "because it showcased many of his talents — singing, dancing and comedy" — in one sketch. Hall cites 1988's *Coming to America* (in which he co-starred) as his favorite Murphy movie, but he ranks 1999's *Bowfinger* a close second, noting that the late **Roger Ebert** said Murphy deserved an Oscar nomination for his performance.

Rock has called Murphy "the funniest guy I've seen in my life," and credits him for convincing **Lucien Hold**, the late manager of New York's Comedy Strip, to give Rock a shot on stage. (In a 2014 interview with *THR*, Rock said he feels responsible for mentoring young African-American comedians because "people took chances on me. Eddie Murphy did not have to put me in *Beverly Hills Cop II*.")

Watching Murphy on *SNL* "made me want to do comedy," says **Tracy Morgan**, who will make only his second major public appearance to honor Murphy (following a surprise turn at the Emmys on Sept. 20) since a June 2014 car crash left him severely injured. Says Morgan, "He's the **Michael Jordan** and **Muhammad Ali** of comedy."

Cappy McGarr, one of the show's executive producers and a Kennedy Center board member, says Morgan's appearance likely will be the emotional highlight of an event that has become a key stop on the Washington social circuit. He admits that wasn't true in 1998, when the first award went to Murphy's longtime idol **Richard Pryor**. (Other past honorees include **Jay Leno**, **Will Ferrell**, **Tina Fey** and **Lorne Michaels**.) "In the first few years, we had difficulty trying to get it off the ground," says McGarr. "But now we attract everyone from Supreme Court justices to senators and congressmen."

The nomination process begins with McGarr and the other three exec producers canvassing the comedy community to compile a short list before running a selection past the Kennedy Center board, which includes such Hollywood heavyweights as HBO programming president **Michael Lombardo**, CAA co-chairman **Bryan Lourd** and **Shonda Rhimes**. The producers then huddle with the nominee to choose career highlights on which to focus. Not surprisingly, the show's vibe depends on the honoree. "We honored **Carol Burnett** a couple of years ago, the first woman who had a variety show and a tremendous influence," says McGarr. "But believe me, Eddie Murphy's show is going to be a little different than Burnett's show." THR



5 Pivotal Roles in Murphy's Career

***BEVERLY HILLS COP* (1984)**
After three features in which he was a white actor's co-star, he took the limelight in this streetwise original.



***TRADING PLACES* (1983)**
In Murphy's most rewatchable film, his effort as a stock-picking savant paired him with a perfect comic foil, **Dan Aykroyd**'s insufferable WASP.



***THE NUTTY PROFESSOR* (1996)**
The first of the family-geared outings (such as *Dr. Doolittle* and *Shrek*) that would highlight his career earned him new fans — and mountains of cash.



***48 HRS.* (1982)**
He and **Nick Nolte** found an edgy chemistry that spawned years of buddy-cop flicks, but this was no easy laugher.



***BOWFINGER* (1999)**
In a rare risk during his post-'80s career, he mocked the insular nature of megafame, demonstrating what looked like self-awareness. — JOHN DEFORE

MURPHY: PICTURE PERFECT/REX USA; NEIGHBORHOOD: NBC/PHOTOFEST. *DELIRIOUS*: HBO/PHOTOFEST. *TRADING, BEVERLY, 48*: PARAMOUNT PICTURES/PHOTOFEST. *NUTTY, BOWFINGER*: UNIVERSAL PICTURES/PHOTOFEST. MORGAN: MATT SAYLES/INVISION FOR THE ACADEMY OF TELEVISION ARTS & SCIENCES/AP IMAGES. ROCK: OWEN SWEENEY/INVISION/AP.

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Tom McCarthy and Josh Singer

HOLLYWOOD BLOCKBUSTER AWARD
Furious 7

HOLLYWOOD SONG AWARD
Wiz Khalifa & Charlie Puth
"See You Again"

HOLLYWOOD ANIMATION AWARD
Inside Out
by Pete Docter

HOLLYWOOD DOCUMENTARY AWARD
Asif Kapadia for Amy

HOLLYWOOD VISUAL EFFECTS AWARD
Tim Alexander

HOLLYWOOD CINEMATOGRAPHY AWARD
Janusz Kaminski

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Cooper in 2005 in Fox's short-lived comedy *Kitchen Confidential*.

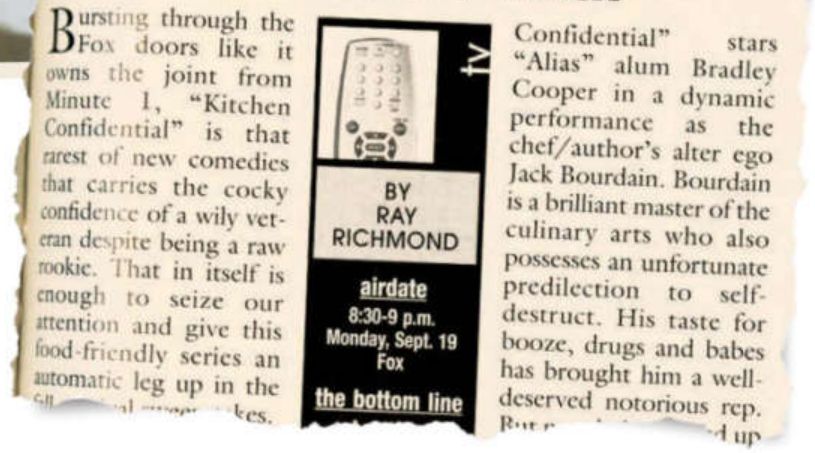
Bradley Cooper Played Another Chef a Decade Ago

MOST ACTORS can have successful careers without even knowing who Anthony Bourdain is. But Bradley Cooper has managed to play a Bourdain-esque chef twice in the past decade. Coming off a breakout role in 2005's *Wedding Crashers*, Cooper played a fictionalized version of Bourdain in Fox's short-lived 2005 sitcom *Kitchen Confidential*, based on the now-59-year-old *Parts Unknown* host's 2000 memoir. Now, in The Weinstein Co.'s *Burnt*, the three-time Oscar nominee, 40, again plays a cook who engages in recreational drug use and wild behavior — a self-destructive streak highly reminiscent of Bourdain's early career. (Cooper draws from experience: He's battled his own addiction demons, and, as a teenager, he worked in two restaurants doing prep work.)

The Hollywood Reporter was definitely upbeat about *Confidential* when it premiered. "An energetic blend of sex, sophistication, outlandishness and rat-a-tat-tat dialogue spilling from the mouths of effortlessly attractive characters," said the review. *THR* especially liked the line: "Did anyone see the tip of my finger?"

Despite being canceled after just four episodes, the show received a Writers Guild nomination for best episodic comedy. *Confidential* was sunk by a perfect storm: It was just ahead of the curve on the food craze; the network head who ordered it, Gail Berman, left before it got to air; and the premiere episode was bumped for the World Series. However, it did give Cooper his first major exposure as a leading man.

"The moment I saw his tape, I knew he was a rock star and we had to have this guy for the show," says creator David Hemingson, who since has gone on to work on *Black-ish*. "He had this quality of being both brazen and incredibly vulnerable at the same time. It was something I'd never seen before or since." *Burnt* (previously titled *Adam Jones*) is set for an Oct. 30 wide release. — BILL HIGGINS



'Kitchen Confidential'

Bursting through the Fox doors like it owns the joint from Minute 1, "Kitchen Confidential" is that rarest of new comedies that carries the cocky confidence of a wily veteran despite being a raw rookie. That in itself is enough to seize our attention and give this food-friendly series an automatic leg up in the

tv

BY RAY RICHMOND

airdate
8:30-9 p.m.
Monday, Sept. 19
Fox

the bottom line

Confidential" stars "Alias" alum Bradley Cooper in a dynamic performance as the chef/author's alter ego Jack Bourdain. Bourdain is a brilliant master of the culinary arts who also possesses an unfortunate predilection to self-destruct. His taste for booze, drugs and babes has brought him a well-deserved notorious rep.

MICHAEL DESMOND/FOX/PHOTOFEST

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